AN APOLOGY For Actors.

Containing three briefe Treatises.

1 *Their Antiquity.*
2 *Their ancient Dignity.*
3 *The true vse of their quality.*

Written by *Thomas Heywood.*

Et prodesse volent & delectare——

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1612.

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TO THE RIGHT HONOVRABLE, *EDWARD*, Earle of Worceſter,

Lord of Chepſtoll, Ragland, and Gower, Knight of the moſt Noble Order of the Garter, Maiſter of the Horſe, and one of the Kings moſt Honourable PRIVY COVNCEL.

KNowing all the vertues and endowments of Nobility, which floriſht in their height of eminence in your Anceſtors, now, as by a diuine legacy, and lineall inheritance, to ſuruiue in you; and ſo conſequently from you, to your truly ennobled Iſſue. (Right Honourable) I preſumed to publiſh this vnworthy worke vnder your gracious patronage: firſt, as an acknowledgement of that duty I am bound to you in, as a ſeruant. Next, aſſured that your moſt iudiciall cenſure is able to approue what therein is authentike and good, as your Noble and

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accustomed modesty will charitably conniue: if there be any thing therein vnworthy your learned approbation. I haue striu'd (my Lord) to make good a subiect, which many through enuy, but most through ignorance, haue sought violently, (and beyond merit) to oppugne: in which, if they haue either wandred through spleene, or erred by non-knowledge, I haue (to my power) plainly and freely illustrated, propounding a true, direct, and faithfull discourse, touching the Antiquity, the ancient Dignity, and the true vse of Actors, and their quality. If my industry herein be by the common Aduersary harshly receiued, but by your Honour charitably censured, I haue from the iniuditious (whom I esteeme not) but what I expect: but from your Lordship (whom I euer reuerence) more then I can merit.

Your Honours humbly deuoted,

Thomas Heywood.

To my good Friends and Fellowes, *the Citty-Actors.*

OVt of my buſieſt houres, I haue ſpared my ſelfe ſo much time as to touch ſome particulars concerning vs, to approue our Antiquity, ancient Dignity, and the true vſe of our quality. That it hath beene ancient, we haue deriued it from more then two thouſand yeeres agoe, ſucceſſiuely to this age. That it hath beene eſteemed by the beſt and greateſt: to omit all the noble Patrons of the former world, I need alledge no more then the Royall and Princely ſeruices, in which we now liue. That the vſe thereof is authentique, I haue done my endeauour to inſtance by Hiſtory, and approue by authority. To excuſe my ignorance in affecting no floriſh of Eloquence, to ſet a gloſſe vpon my Treatiſe, I haue nothing to ſay for my ſelfe but this: A good face needs no painting, & a good cauſe no abetting. *Some ouercurious haue too liberally taxed vs: and hee (in my thoughts) is held worthy reproofe, whoſe ignorance cannot anſwere for it ſelfe: I hold it more honeſt for the guiltleſſe to excuſe, then the enuious to exclaime. And we may as freely (out of our plainneſſe) anſwere, as they (out of their peruerſneſſe obiect) inſtancing my ſelfe by famous* Scalliger, *learned Doctor* Gager, *Doctor*

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Doctor Gentiles, *and others, whose opinions and approued arguments on our part, I haue in my briefe discourse altogether omitted; because I am loath to bee taxed in borrowing from others: and besides, their workes being extant to the world, offer themselues freely to euery mans perusall. I am profest aduersary to none, I rather couet reconcilement, then opposition, nor proceedes this my labour from any enuy in me, but rather to shew them wherein they erre. So wishing you iudiciall Audiences, honest Poets, and true gatherers, I commit you all to the fulnesse of your best wishes.*

Yours euer,

T. H.

TO THE IVDICIALL READER.

I Haue vndertooke a ſubiect (curteous Reader) not of ſufficient countenance to bolſter it ſelfe by his owne ſtrength; and therefore haue charitably reached it my hand to ſupport it againſt any ſucceeding Aduerſary. I could willingly haue committed this worke to ſome more able then my ſelfe: for the weaker the Combatant, hee needeth the ſtronger Armes. But in extremities, I hold it better to weare ruſty Armour, then to goe naked; yet if theſe weake habilliments of warre, can but buckler it from part of the rude buffets of our Aduerſaries, I ſhall hold my paines ſufficiently guerdoned. My pen hath ſeldome appeared in Preſſe till now, I haue beene euer too iealous of mine owne weakneſſe, willingly to thruſt into the Preſſe: nor had I at this time, but that a kinde of neceſſity enioyned me to ſo ſudden a buſineſſe. I will neither ſhew my ſelfe ouer-preſumtuous, in skorning thy fauour, nor too importunate a beggar, by too ſeruilly intreating it. What thou art content to beſtow vpon my

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my pains, I am content to accept: if good thoughts, they are all I desire: if good words, they are more then I deserue: if bad opinion, I am sorry I haue incur'd it: if euil language, I know not how I haue merited it: if any thing, I am pleased: if nothing, I am satisfied, contenting my selfe with this: I haue done no more then (had I beene called to account) shewed what I could say in the defence of my owne quality.

Thine

T. Heywood.

Firma valent per se, nullumq; Machina quærunt.

TO

Ἀπολογία τῶν παπιζόντων.

Τοῦτο βροτοῖσι μέλει μούσῃσι περικαλλὲα ὕμνειν
Καὶ κλέα καὶ δ' ἀρετὰς: ἔσαμεν μεγάλ; τὸν γὰρ ἄλητεσι
Εὗρε θεὸς θελκτὴν μέλος ἀνθρώποισι τονήεσσι
φεύγει, μεθεῖς τῶν κῶμα κακῶν: κωμῳδία δ' ἔξει
Τὴν ἢ ὑποθήκας; μήτε καλ' ἔργα τραγῳδία κήρυσσει:
Ἄγει θεὸς, καὶ ὅσσα, ὅτι φαῦλος ὁμῶς τ' ὑπερφέρτατος
Βέλτατο, καὶ παραπλῆσιος δ' ἐν μεγαλόισι θεατῆσι:
Ἀλλ' ἀγαθὰν εἶδες δυνάμεις καὶ λεπτὰ φρίσσειν.
Εἰ φιλεῖς μούσας φιλεῖν δεῖ ἕνεκα θεάτρου.
Ἀσχέα δώκαν: κεφάλαν, κεφαλὰν δὲ τὰ πόλεσσιν.

Αλ. Γρ.

In laudem, nec Operis, nec Authoris.

FAllor? en hæc ſolis non ſolùm grata Theatris?
(Eſſe putes ſolis quanquam dicta Theatris)
Magna ſed à ſacro veniet tibi gratia Templo,
Parue Liber; proles haut infitianda Parenti.
Plurimus hunc nactus Librum de-plebe-Sacerdos
(Copia Verborum cui ſit, non copia Rerum)
Materiæ tantum petet hinc; quantum nec in vno
Promere Menſe poteſt: nec in vno forſitan Anno.
Da quemuis Textum; balbâ de Nare locutus,
Protinùs exclamat (Nefanda piacula!) in vrbe
(Proh dolor!) Impietas nudatâ fronte vagatur!
Ecce Ibrum (Fratres) Damnando Authore Poetâ:
Pejorem, nec Sol vidit, nec Verſtius Ipſe
Hæreſiarcha valet componere: Quippe Theatri
Mentitas loquitur laudes (ô Tempora!) laudet
Idem ſi potis eſt, Monachum, Monachiue Cucullum.
Sacro quis Laudes vnquam Nomén-ve Theatri
Repperit in CANONE? haud vllus. Stolidiſſime, Dogma
Non CANONEM ſapit hoc igitur, ſed Apocryphon. Inde
(Lymphatum attonito pectus tundente Popello,
Et vacuum quaſſante caput mœſtumq; tuenti)
Sic multo raucùm crocitans ſudore Perorat;

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Quod non dant Proceres dedit Hiſtrio: *nempe benignam*
Materiam Declamandi, plebémq; docendi.
Quis tamen hic Myſtes tragico qui Fulmina ab ore
Torquet? Num doctus? Certè. Nam Metra Catonis
Quattuor edidicit, totidem quoq; Commata Tulli.
Ieiunámq; catecheſin piſtoribus æquè
Fartoribuſq; Piis ſcripſit. Liber Vtilis his, Qui
Baptiſtam ſimulant vultu, Floralia viuunt:
Queiſq; Supercilio breuior coma. *Sed venerandos*
Graios Hic Latioſq; patres exoſus ad vnum eſt;
Et Canones damnans fit Apocryphus. *Vritur intùs.*
Laudibus ACTORIS multùm mordetur. Ab illo
Laude ſuâ Fraudatur enim. Quis neſcit? Iniquum'ſt
Præter ſe Scripto laudetur (a) Hypocrita quiſquam.
Fallor? an hæc ſolis non ſolùm grata Theatris?

(a) Hypocrita propriè perſonatum hiſtrionem denotat.

Anonymus. Siue
Peſſimus omnium Poëta.

To them that are oppoſite to this worke.

CEaſe your detracting tongues conteſt no more,
Leaue off for ſhame to wound the Actors fame,
Seeke rather their wrong'd credit to reſtore,
Your enuy and detractions, quite diſclaime:
You that haue term'd their ſports laſciuious, vile,
Wiſhing good Princes would them all exile;
See here this queſtion to the full diſputed:
Heywood, hath you, and all your proofes confuted.

Wouldſt ſee an Emperour and his Counſell graue,
A noble Souldier acted to the life,
A *Romane* Tyrant how he doth behaue
Himſelfe: at home, abroad, in peace, in ſtriſe? (ceſſe,
Wouldſt ſee what's loue, what's hate, what's foule ex-
Or wouldſt a Traytor in his kind expreſſe;
Our Stagerites can (by the Poets pen)
Appeare to you to bee the ſelfe ſame men.

What

What though a ſort for ſpight, or want of wit,
Hate what the beſt allow, the moſt forbeare,
What exerciſe can you deſire more fit,
Then ſtately ſtratagemes to ſee and heare.
What profit many may attaine by playes,
To the moſt critticke eye this booke diſplaies,
Braue men, braue acts, being brauely acted too,
Makes, as men ſee things done, deſire to do.

And did it nothing but in pleaſing ſort,
Keepe gallants from miſpending of their time,
It might ſuffice: yet here is nobler ſport,
Acts well contriu'd, good Proſe, and ſtately rime.
To call to Church, *Campanus* bels did make,
Playes, dice, and drinke inuite men to forſake:
Their vſe being good then vſe the Actors well,
Since ours all other Nations farre excell.

AR: HOPTON.

To his beloued friend Maiſter THOMAS HEYVVOD.

Sume ſuperbiam quæſitam meritis.

I Cannot, though you write in your owne cauſe,
Say you deale partially; but muſt confeſſe,
(What moſt men wil) you merit due applauſe;
So worthily your worke becomes the Preſſe,

And well our Actors, may approue your paines,
For you giue them authority to play;
Euen whilſt the hotteſt plague of enuy raignes,
Nor for this warrant ſhall they dearly pay.

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What a full ſtate of Poets, haue you cited,
To iudge your cauſe? and to our equall veiw
Faire Monumentall Theaters recited:
Whoſe ruines had bene ruin'd but for you.

Such men who can in tune, both raile and ſing:
Shall veiwing this, either confeſſe 'tis good,
Or let their ignorance condemne the Spring,
Becauſe 'tis merry and renewes our bloud.

Be therefore your owne iudgement your defence,
Which ſhall approue you better then my praiſe,
Whilſt I in right of ſacred Innocence,
Durſt ore each guilded Tombe this knowne truth raiſe.
„ Who dead would not be acted by their will,
„ It ſeemes ſuch men haue acted their liues ill.

By your friend IOHN WEBSTER.

To my louing Friend and Fellow, THOMAS HEYVVOOD.

THou that do'ſt raile at me for ſeeing a play,
How wouldſt thou haue me ſpend my idle houres?
Wouldſt haue me in a Tauerne drinke all day?
Melt in the Sunnes heate? or walke out in ſhowers?

Gape at the Lottery from morne till euen,
To heare whoſe mottoes blankes haue, and who priſes?
To hazzard all at dice (chance ſix or ſeuen?)
To card? or bowle? My humour this diſpiſes.

But thou wilt anſwer: None of theſe I need,
Yet my tir'd ſpirits muſt haue recreation.
What ſhall I doe that may retirement breed?
Or how refreſh my ſelfe? and in what faſhion?

To

To drabbe, to game, to drinke, all theſe I hate:
Many enormous things depend on theſe,
My faculties truely to recreate
With modeſt mirth, and my ſelfe beſt to pleaſe

Giue me a play; that no diſtaſte can breed,
Proue thou a Spider, and from flowers ſucke gall,
Il'e like a Bee, take hony from a weed:
For I was neuer Puritannicall.

I loue no publicke ſoothers, priuate ſcorners,
That raile 'gainſt letchery, yet loue a harlot.
When I drinke, 'tis in ſight, and not in corners:
I am no open Saint, and ſecret varlet.

Still when I come to playes, I loue to ſit,
That all may ſee me in a publike place:
Euen in the ſtages front, and not to git
Into a nooke, and hood-winke there my face.

"This is the difference, ſuch would haue men deeme,
"Them what they are not: I am what I ſeeme.

Rich. Perkins.

To my good friend and fellow, THOMAS. HEYVVOOD.

LEt others taske things honeſt: and to pleaſe
Some that pretend more ſtrictneſſe then the reſt,
Exclaime on playes: know I am none of theſe
That in-ly loue what out-ly I deteſt.
Of all the modeſt paſtimes I can finde,
To content me, of playes I make beſt vſe,
As moſt agreeing with a generous minde.
There ſee I vertues crowne, and ſinnes abuſe.
Two houres well ſpent, and all their paſtimes done,
Whats good I follow, and whats bad I ſhun.

Chriſtopher. Beeſton.

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To my good friend and fellow, Thomas Heyvvood.

HAue I not knowne a man that to be hyr'd,
Would not for any treaſure ſee a play,
Reele from a Tauerne? Shall this be admir'd?
When as another but the tother day,
That held to weare a ſurpleſſe moſt vnmeet,
Yet after ſtood at *Pauls-croſſe* in a ſheet.

Robert Pallant.

To my approued good friend M. Thomas Heyvvood.

OF thee, and thy *Apology* for playes,
I will not much ſpeake in contempt or praiſe:
Yet in theſe following lines Il'e ſhew my minde,
Of Playes, and ſuch as haue 'gainſt Playes repin'd.
A Play's a briefe *Epitome* of time,
Where man my ſee his vertue or his crime
Layd open, either to their vices ſhame,
Or to their vertues memorable fame.
A Play's a true tranſparant Chriſtall mirror,
To ſhew good minds their mirth, the bad their terror:
Where ſtabbing, drabbing, dicing, drinking, ſwearing
Are all proclaim'd vnto the ſight and hearing,
In vgly ſhapes of Heauen-abhorrid ſinne,
Where men may ſee the mire they wallow in.
And well I know it makes the Diuell rage,
To ſee his ſeruants flouted on a ſtage.
A Whore, a Thiefe, a Pander, or a Bawd,
A Broker, or a ſlaue that liues by fraud:

An

An Vſurer, whoſe ſoule is in his cheſt,
Vntill in hell it comes to reſtleſſe reſt.
A Fly-blowne gull, that faine would be a Gallant,
A Raggamuffin that hath ſpent his Tallant:
A ſelfe-wiſe foole, that ſees his wits out-ſtript,
Or any vice that feeles it ſelfe but nipt,
Either in Tragedy, or Comedy,
In Morall, Paſtorall, or Hiſtory:
But ſtraight the poyſon of their enuious tongues,
Breakes out in vollyes of Calumnious wronges.
And then a Tinker, or a Dray-man ſweares,
I would the houſe were fir'd about their eares.
Thus when a play nips Sathan by the noſe,
Streight all his vaſſails are the Actors foes.
But feare not man, let enuy ſwell and burſt,
Proceed, and bid the Diuell do his worſt.
For Playes are good or bad, as they are vs'd,
And beſt inuentions often are abus'd.

Yours euer,

IOHN TAYLOR.

The Author to his Booke.

THe world's a Theater, the earth a Stage,
Which God, and nature doth with Actors fill,
Kings haue their entrance in due equipage,
And ſome there parts play well and others ill.
The beſt no better are (in this Theater,)
Where euery humor's fitted in his kinde,
This a true ſubiects acts, and that a Traytor,
The firſt applauded, and the laſt confin'd
This plaies an honeſt man, and that a knaue

So compared by the Fathers.

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A gentle perſon this, and he a clowne
One man is ragged, and another braue.
All men haue parts, and each man acts his owne.
She a chaſte Lady acteth all her life,
A wanton Curtezan another playes.
This, couets marriage loue, that, nuptial ſtrife,
Both in continuall action ſpend their dayes.
Some Citizens, ſome Soldiers, borne to aduenter,
Sheepheards and Sea-men; then our play's begun,
When we are borne, and to the world firſt enter,
And all finde *Exits* when their parts are done.
If then the world a Theater preſent,
As by the roundneſſe it appeares moſt fit,
Built with ſtarre-galleries of hye aſcent,
In which *Iehoue* doth as ſpectator ſit.
And chiefe determiner to'applaud the beſt,
And their indeuours crowne with more then merit.
But by their euill actions doomes the reſt,
To end diſgrac't whilſt others praiſe inherit.
No Theater, no world. He that denyes then Theaters ſhould be,
He may as well deny a world to me.

Thomas Heywood.

An Apology for Actors, and first touching their Antiquity

MOOVED by the ſundry exclamations of many ſeditious Sectiſts in this age, who in the fatnes and ranknes of a peaceable Common-wealth, grow vp like vnſauery tufts of graſſe, which though outwardly greene and freſh to the eye, yet are they both vnpleaſant & vnprofitable, beeing too ſower for food, and too ranke for fodder: Theſe men like the antient Germans, affecting no faſhion but their owne, would draw other nations to bee ſlouens like them-ſelues, and vndertaking to purifie and reforme the ſacred bodies of the Church and Common-weale (In the trew vſe of both which they are altogether Ignorãt,) would but like artleſſe Phiſitions, for experiment ſake, rather miniſter pils to poyſon the whole body then cordials to preſerue any or the leaſt part. Amongſt many other thinges tollerated in this peaceable and floriſhing State, it hath pleaſed the high and mighty Princes of this Land to limit the vſe of certaine publicke Theaters, which ſince many of theſe ouer-curious heads haue lauiſhly & violently ſlandered, I hold it nota miſſe to lay open ſome few Antiquities to approue the true vſe of them, with arguments (not of the leaſt moment) which according to the weaknes of my ſpirit and infancy of my iudgment I will (by gods grace) commit

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to the eyes of all fauorable and iudiciall readers, as well to ſatisfie the requeſts of ſome of our well qualified fauorers, as to ſtop the enuious acclamations of thoſe who chalenge to them-ſelues a priuiledge Inuectiue, and againſt all free eſtates a railing liberty: Loath am I (I proteſt) being the youngeſt and weakeſt of the Neſt wherin I was hatcht, to ſoare this pitch before others of the ſame brood more fledge, and of better winge then my ſelfe: but though they whome more eſpecially this taske concernes, both for their ability in writing and ſufficiency in Iudgement (as their workes generally witneſſe to the world:) are content to ouer-ſlip ſo neceſſary a ſubiect, and haue left it as to mee the moſt vnworthy: I thought it better to ſtammer out my mind, then not to ſpeake at all; to ſcribble downe a marke in the ſtead of writing a name, and to ſtumble on the way, rather then to ſtand ſtill and not to proceede on ſo neceſſary a Iourney. *Nox erat, & ſomnus laſſos ſubmiſit ocellos.*

It was about that time of the night when darknes had already ouerſpread the world, and a huſht and generall ſylence poſſeſt the face of the earth, and mens bodyes tyred with the buſineſſe of the day, betaking themſelues to their beſt repoſe, their neuer-ſleeping ſoules labored in vncoth dreames and viſions, when ſuddenly appeared to me the tragicke Muſe *Melpomene*

——— *animoſa Tragedia.*

——— *& mouit pictis imixa Cothurnis*

Denſum Ceſarie, terque quaterque Caput:

Her heyre rudely diſheueled, her chaplet withered, her viſage with teares ſtayned, her brow furrowed, her eyes deiected, nay her whole complexion quite faded and altered: and peruſing her habit, I might behold the colour of her freſh roabe all Crimſon, breathed, and with the inuenomed iuice of ſome prophane ſpilt inke in euery place ſtained: nay more, her busken of all the wonted Iewels and ornaments, vtterly deſpoyled; about which in manner of a garter I might behold theſe letters written in a playne and large

large Character.

Behold my Tragicke Buskin rent and torne,
Which Kings and Emperors in their tymes haue worne.

This I no ſooner had perus'd, but ſuddenly I might perceaue the inraged Muſe, caſt vp her skornfull head: her eyebals ſparklefire, & a ſuddain flaſh of diſdaine, intermixt with rage, purple her cheeke. When pacing with a maieſticke gate & rowſing vp her freſh ſpirits with a liuely and queint action, ſhee began in theſe or the like words.

Grande ſouant tragici, tragicos decet Ira Cothurnos.
Am I Melpomene the buskend Muſe,
That held in awe the tyrants of the world,
And playde their liues in publicke Theaters,
Making them feare to ſinne, ſince feareleſſe I
Prepar'd to wryte their liues in Crimſon Inke,
And act their ſhames in eye of all the world?
Haue not I whipt Vice with a ſcourge of ſteele,
Vnmaskt ſterne Murther; ſham'd laſciuious Luſt.
Pluct off the viſar from grimme Treaſons face,
And made the Sunne point at their vgly ſinnes?
Hath not this powerfull hand tam'd fiery Rage,
Kild poyſonous Enuy with her owne keene darts,
Choak't vp the Couetous mouth with moulten gold,
Burſt the vaſt wombe of eating Gluttony,
And drownd the Drunkards gall in iuice of grapes?
I haue ſhowed Pryde his picture on a ſtage,
Layde ope the vgly ſhapes his ſteele-glaſſe hid,
And made him paſſe thence meekely: In thoſe daies
When Emperours with their preſence grac't my ſceanes,
And thought none worthy to preſent themſelues
Saue Emperours: to delight Embaſſadours.
Then did this garland floriſh, then my Roabe
Was of the deepeſt Crimſon, the beſt dye:
Cura Ducum fuerant olim regumque poetæ.
Premiaque Antiqui magna tulere Chori
Who lodge then in the boſome of great Kings.

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Saue he that had a graue Cothurnate Muſe.
A ſtately verſe in an Iambick ſtile
Became a Keſars mouth. Oh theſe were times
Fit for you Bards to vent your golden Rymes.
Then did I tread on Arras, Cloth of Tiſſue,
Hung round the fore-front of my ſtage: the pillers
That did ſupport the Roofe of my large frame
Double apparrel'd in pure Ophir gold:
Whilſt the round Circle of my ſpacious orbe
Was throng'd with Princes, Dukes and Senators.
Nunc Hederæ ſine Honore iacent.
But now's the Iron age, and black-mouth'd Curres,
Barke at the vertues of the former world.
Such with their breath haue blaſted my freſh roabe,
Pluckt at my flowry Chaplet, towſd my treſſes.
Nay ſome whom for their baſeneſſe hiſt and skorn'd
The Stage, as loathſome, hath long-ſince ſpued out,
Haue watcht their time to caſt inuenom'd Inke
To ſtayne my garments with. Oh Seneca
Thou tragicke Poet, hadſt thou liu'd to ſee
This outrage done to ſad Melpomene,
With ſuch ſharpe lynes thou wouldſt reuenge my blot,
As Armed Ouid *againſt* Ibis *wrot.*

With that in rage ſhee left the place, and I my dreame, for at the inſtant I awaked, when hauing peruſed this viſion ouer and ouer againe in my remembrance, I ſuddenly bethought mee, How many antient Poets, Tragicke and Comicke, dying many ages agoe liue ſtill amongſt vs in their works, as amongſt the *Greekes, Euripides: Menander. Sophocles, Eupolis, Eſchilus, Ariſtophanes, Appollodorus, Anaxandrides, Nichomachus, Alexis, Terew* and others, ſo among the Latins: *Attilius, Actius, Melithus, Plautus, Terens,* & others whome fore breuity ſake I omit.

Hos Ediſcit & hos arcto ſtipata Theatro
Spectat Roma potens habet hos, numeratque Poetas.
Theſe potent Rome acquires and holdeth deare.

And

And in their round Theaters flocks to heare:

These or any of these had they liued in the afternoone of the world, as they dyed euen in the morning, I assure my selfe wold haue left more memorable tropheys of that learned Muse, whome in their golden numbers they so richly adorned. And amongst our moderne poets, who haue bene industrious in many an elaborate and ingenious poem, euen they whose pennes haue had the greatest trafficke with the Stage, haue bene in the excuse of these Muses most forgetfull But leauing these, lest I make too large a head to a small body, and so mishape my subiect, I will begin with the antiquity of Acting Comedies, Tragedies, and Hystories. And first in the golden world.

In the first of the *Olimpiads*, amongst many other actiue exercises in which *Hercules* euer trimph'd as victor, there was in his nonage presented vnto him by his Tutor in the fashion of a History, acted by the choyse of the nobility of Greece, the worthy and memorable acts of his father *Iupiter*. Which being personated with liuely and well-spirited action, wrought such impression in his noble thoughts, that in meere emulation of his fathers valor (not at the behest of his Stepdame *Iuno*) he perform'd his twelue labours: Him valiant *Theseus* followed, and *Achilles*, *Theseus*. Which bred in them such hawty and magnanimous attempts, that euery succeeding age hath recorded their worths, vnto fresh admiration. *Aristotle* that Prince of Philosophers, whose bookes carry such credit, euen in these our vniuersities, that to say *Ipse dixit* is a sufficient *Axioma*, hee hauing the tuition of young *Alexander*, caused the destruction of Troy to be acted before his pupill, in which the valor of *Achilles* was so naturally expresst, that it impresst the hart of *Alexander*, in so much that all his succeeding actions were meerly shaped after that patterne, and it may be imagined had *Achilles* neuer liued, *Alexander* had neuer conquered the whole world. The like assertion may be made of that euer-renowned Roman *Iulius Cæsar*. Who

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after the like repreſentation of *Alexander* in the Temple of *Hercules* ſtanding in Gades was neuer in any peace of thoughts, till by his memorable exployts, hee had purchas'd to himſelfe the name of *Alexander:* as *Alexander* till hee thought himſelfe of deſert to be called *Achilles:* *Achilles Theſeus*, *Theſeus* till he had ſufficiently Imitated the acts of *Hercules*, and *Hercules* till hee held himſelfe worthy to bee called the ſon of *Iupiter*. Why ſhould not the liues of theſe worthyes, preſented in theſe our dayes, effect the like wonders in the Princes of our times, which can no way bee ſo exquiſitly demonſtrated, nor ſo liuely portrayed as by action: Oratory is a kind of a ſpeaking picture, therefore may ſome ſay, is it not ſufficient to diſcourſe to the eares of princes the fame of theſe conquerors: Painting likewiſe, is a dumbe oratory, therefore may we not as well by ſome curious *Pigmalion*, drawe their conqueſts to worke the like loue in Princes towards theſe Worthyes by ſhewing them their pictures drawne to the life, as it wrought on the poore painter to bee inamored of his owne ſhadow; I anſwer this.

Non magis expreſſi vultus per aheneа ſigna
Quam per vatis opus, mores animique virorum
Clarorum apparent. ——
The viſage is no better cut in braſſe,
Nor can the Caruer ſo expreſſe the face
As doth the Poets penne whoſe arts ſurpaſſe,
To giue mens liues and vertues their due grace.

A Deſcription is only a ſhadow receiued by the eare but not perceiued by the eye: ſo liuely portrature is meerely a forme ſeene by the eye, but can neither ſhew action, paſſion, motion, or any other geſture, to mooue the ſpirits of the beholder to admiration: but to ſee a ſouldier ſhap'd like a ſouldier, walke, ſpeake, act like a ſouldier: to ſee a *Hector* all beſmered in blood, trampling vpon the bulkes of Kinges. A *Troylus* returning from the field in the ſight of his father *Priam*, as if man and horſe euen from the ſteeds rough fetlockes to the plume in the champions helmet had bene

together plunged into a purple Ocean: To ſee a *Pompey* ride in triumph, then a *Ceſar* conquer that *Pompey*: labouring *Hannibal* aliue, hewing his paſſage through the Alpes. To ſee as I haue ſeene, *Hercules* in his owne ſhape hunting the Boare, knocking downe the Bull, taming the Hart, fighting with Hydra, murdering *Gerion*, ſlaughtring *Diomed*, wounding the *Stimphalides*, killing the Centaurs, paſhing the Lion, ſqueezing the Dragon, dragging *Cerberus* in Chaynes, and laſtly, on his high Pyramides writing *Nil vltra*, Oh theſe were ſights to make an *Alexander*.

To turne to our domeſticke hyſtories, what Engliſh blood ſeeing the perſon of any bold Engliſh man preſented and doth not hugge his fame, and hunnye at his valor, purſuing him in his enterpriſe with his beſt wiſhes, and as beeing wrapt in contemplation, offers to him in his hart all proſperous performance, as if the Perſonater were the man Perſonated, ſo bewitching a thing is liuely and well ſpirited action, that it hath power to new mold the harts of the ſpectators and faſhion them to the ſhape of any noble and notable attempt. What coward to ſee his contryman valiant would not bee aſhamed of his owne cowardiſe? What Engliſh Prince ſhould hee behold the true portrature of that amous King *Edward* the third, foraging France, taking ſo great a King captiue in his owne country, quartering the Engliſh Lyons with the French Flower-delyce, and would not bee ſuddenly Inflam'd with ſo royall a ſpectacle, being made apt and fit for the like atchieuement. So of *Henry* the fift: but not to be tedious in any thing. *Ouid* in one of his poems holds this opinion, that *Romulus* was the firſt that brought plaies into Italy, which he thus ſets downe:

Primus ſollicitos feciſti Romule Ludos.
Cum iurit viduos rapta ſabina viros
Tunc neque marmoreo pendebant vela Theatro, &c.
Which wee Engliſh thus.
Thou noble Romulus *firſt playes contriues,*
To get thy widdowed ſouldiers Sabine *wyues.*

De Arte Amandi. 1.

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In those dayes from the marble house did waue
No saile, no silken flagge, or ensigne braue.
Then was the Tragicke stage not painted red,
Or any mixed staines on pillers spred.
Then did the Sceane want art, th'vnready stage
Was made of grasse and earth in that rude age:
About the which were thicke-leau'd branches placed,
Nor did the Audients hold themselues disgraced
Of turfe and heathy sods to make their seates,
Fram'd in degrees of earth, and mossy peates.
Thus plac'd in order, euery Roman pry'd
Into her face that sate next by his side;
And closing with her, seuerally gan moue,
The innocent Sabine women to their loue:
And whil'st the piper Thuscus *rudely plaid,*
And by thrice stamping with his foote had made
A signe vnto the rest, there was a shout,
Whose shrill report pierst all the aire about.
Now at a signe of rape giuen from the King,
Round through the house the lusty Romans fling,
Leauing no corner of the same vnsought,
Till euery one a frighted virgin caught.
Looke as the trembling Doue the Eagle flyes,
Or a yong Lambe when he the Woolfe espyes;
So ran the poore girles, filling th'aire with skreekes.
Emptying of all the colour their pale cheekes.
One feare possest them all, but not one looke,
This teares her haire, she hath her wits forsooke.
Some sadly sit, some on their mothers call,
Some chafe, some flye, some stay, but frighted all.
Thus were the rauish'd Sabines blushing led
(Becomming shame) vnto each Romans bed.
If any striu'd against it, streight her man
Would take her on his knee (whom feare made wan)
And say; Why weep'st thou sweet? what ailes my deere?
Dry vp these drops, these clowds of sorrow cleere.

Ile

Ile be to thee, if thou thy griefe wilt ſmother,
Such as thy father was vnto thy mother.
Full well could Romulus *his Souldiers pleaſe,*
To giue them ſuch faire miſtreſſes as theſe:
If ſuch rich wages thou wilt giue to me,
Great Romulus, thy ſouldier I will be.

Romulus hauing erected the walles of *Rome*, and leading vnder him a warlike Nation, being in continuall warre with the *Sabines*, after the choyce ſelecting of a place, fit for ſo famous a Citty, and not knowing how to people the ſame, his traine wholly conſiſting of Souldiers, who without the company of women (they not hauing any in their Army) could not multiply; but ſo were likely that their immortall fames ſhould dye iſſuleſſe with their mortall bodies. Thus therefore *Romulus* deuiſed; After a parle and attonement made with the neighbour Nations, hee built a Theater, plaine, according to the time; yet large, fit for the entertainement of ſo great an Aſſembly, and theſe were they whoſe famous iſſue peopled the Cittie of *Rome*, which in after ages grew to ſuch height, that not *Troy*, founded by *Dardanus*, *Carthage* layed by *Dido*, *Tyrus* built by *Agenor*, *Memphis* made by *Ogdous*, *Thebes* ſeated by *Cadmus*, nor *Babylon* reared by *Semiramis*, were any way equall to this ſituation grounded by *Romulus*: to which all the diſcouered kingdomes of the earth after became tributaries. And in the noone-tide of their glory, and height of all their honor, they edified Theaters, and Amphi-theaters: for in their flouriſhing Common-weale, their publike *Comedians* and *Tragedians* moſt floriſhed, inſomuch that the Tragicke and Comicke Poets, were all generally admired of the people, and particularly euery man of his priuate *Mecenas*.

In the reigne of *Auguſtus* Chriſt was borne, and as well in his dayes as before his birth, theſe ſolemnities were held in the greateſt eſtimation. In *Iulius Cæſars* time, predeceſſor to *Auguſtus*, the famous hony-tong'd Orator *Cicero* floriſhed;

Imperante Auguſto, natus eſt Chriſtus.
Imperante Tiberio crucifixus.

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floriſhed; who, amongſt many other his eloquent Orations, writ certaine yet extant, for the *Comedian Roſcius (pro Roſcio Comædo)* of whom we ſhall ſpeake more large hereafter. Theſe continued in their honour till the reigne of *Tiberius Cæſar*, and vnder *Tiberius* Chriſt was crucified. To this end do I vſe this aſſertion, becauſe in the full and perfect time our Sauiour ſoiurned on the earth, euen in thoſe happy and peaceſull dayes the ſpacious Theaters were in the greateſt opinion amongſt the Romans; yet, neither Chriſt himſelfe, nor any of his ſanctified Apoſtles, in any of their Sermons, Acts, or Documents, ſo much as named them, or vpon any abuſiue occaſion, touched them. Therefore hence (me thinkes) a very probable and important argument may be grounded, that ſince they, in their diuine wiſdomes, knew all the ſinnes abounding in the world before that time, taxt and reproued all the abuſes reigning in that time, and foreſaw all the actions and inconueniences (to the Church preiudiciall) in the time to come; Since they (I ſay) in all their holy doctrines, bookes, and principles of Diuinity, were content to paſſe them ouer, as things tollerated, and indifferent, why ſhould any nice and ouer-ſcrupulous heads, ſince they cannot ground their curiouſneſſe either vpon the old or new Teſtament, take vpon them to correct, controule, and carpe at that, againſt which they cannot finde any text in the ſacred Scriptures?

In the time of *Nero Cæſar*, the Apoſtle *Paul* was perſecuted and ſuffered, *Nero* was then Emperour, *Paul* writ his Epiſtle to the Romans, and at the ſame time did the Theaters moſt floriſh amongſt the Romans; yet where can we quote any place in his Epiſtles, which forbids the Church of God, then reſident in *Rome*, to abſent themſelues from any ſuch aſſemblies.

To ſpeake my opinion with all indifferency, God hath not enioyned vs to weare all our apparrell ſolely to defend the cold: Some garments we weare for warmth, others for ornament. So did the children of Iſrael hang eare-rings in their

their eares, nor was it by the law forbidden them. That purity is not look't for at our hands, being mortall and humane, that is required of the Angels, being celestiall and diuine. God made vs of earth, men; knowes our natures, dispositions and imperfections, and therefore hath limited vs a time to reioyce, as hee hath enioyned vs a time to mourne for our transgressiõs. And I hold them more scrupulous than well aduised, that goe about to take from vs the vse of all moderate recreations. Why hath God ordained for man, varietie of meates, dainties and delicates, if not to taste thereon? why doth the world yeeld choyce of honest pastimes, if not decently to vse them? Was not the Hare made to be hunted? the Stagge to be chaced; and so of all other beasts of game in their seuerall kindes? since God hath prouided vs of these pastimes, why may wee not vse them to his glory? Now if you aske me why were not the Theaters as gorgeously built in all other Cities of *Italy* as *Rome*? And why are not Play-houses maintained as well in other Cities of *England*, as *London*? my answere is: It is not meet euery meane Esquire should carry the part belonging to one of the Nobility, or for a Noble-man to vsurpe the estate of a Prince. *Rome* was a *Metropolis*, a place whither all the nations knowne vnder the Sunne, resorted: so is *London*, and being to receiue all Estates, all Princes, all Nations, therefore to affoord them all choyce of pastimes, sports, and recreations: yet were there Theaters in all the greatest Cities of the world, as we will more largely particularize hereafter.

I neuer yet could read any History of any Commonweale, which did not thriue & prosper whilst these publike solemnities were held in adoration. Oh but (say some) *Marcus Aurelius* banisht all such triuiall exercises beyond the confines of *Italy*. Indeed this Emperour was a Philosopher of the sect of *Diogenes*, a Cinicke, and whether the hand of *Diogenes* would become a scepter, or a root better, I leaue to your iudgments. This *Aurelius* was a great & sharpe re-

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prouer, who becauſe the Matrons and Ladies of *Rome*, in ſcorne of his perſon made a play of him; in his time, interdicted the vſe of their Theaters. So, becauſe his wife *Fauſtine* plaid falſe with him, he generally exclaimed againſt all women: becauſe himſelfe could not touch an Inſtrument, he baniſht all the Muſitians in *Rome*, and being a meere coward, put all the Gladiators and ſword-players into exile. And leſt his owne ſuſpected life ſhould be againe acted by the Comedians, as it before had beene by the noble Matrons, he profeſt himſelfe aduerſary to all of that quality, ſo ſeuere a reformation of the weale publike hee vſed, reſtraining the Citizens of their free liberties, which till his daies was not ſeene in *Rome*; but what profited this the weale publicke? do but peruſe the ancient Roman Chronicles, & you ſhall vndoubtedly finde, that from the time of this preciſe Emperour, that ſtately City, whoſe lofty buildings crowned ſeuen high hils at once, and ouer-peered them all, ſtreight way began to hang the head, by degrees the forreigne kingdomes reuolted, and the homage done them by ſtrange Nations, was in a little ſpace quite abrogated: for they gouerned all the world, ſome vnder Conſuls, ſome vnder Pro-conſuls, Preſidents and Pretors, they diuided their dominions and countryes into principalities, ſome into Prouinces, ſome into Toparchyes. ſome into Tetrarchyes, ſome into Tribes, others into Ethnarchyes: but now their homage ceaſt, *Marcus Aurelius* ended their mirth, which preſaged that ſhortly after ſhould begin their ſorrow, he baniſht their liberty. & immediatly followed their bondage. For *Rome*, which till then kept all the Nations of the world in ſubiectiue awe, was in a little ſpace awd euen by the baſeſt nations of the world. To leaue *Italy*, and looke backe into *Greece*, the Sages and Princes of *Grecia*, who for the refinedneſſe of their language, were in ſuch reputation through the world, that all other tongues were eſteemed barbarous; Theſe that were the firſt vnderſtanders, trained vp their youthfull Nobility to bee Actors, debarring

barring the base Mechanickes so worthy imployment: for none but the yong Heroes were admitted that practise, so to embolden them in the deliuery of any forraine Embassy. These wise men of *Greece* (so called by the Oracle) could by their industry, finde out no neerer or directer course to plant humanity and manners in the hearts of the multitude then to instruct them by moralized mysteries, what vices to auoyd, what vertues to embrace; what enormityes to abandon, what ordinances to obserue: whose liues (being for some speciall endowments in former times honoured) they should admire and follow: whose vicious actions (personated in some licentious liuer) they should despise & shunne: which borne out as well by the wisedome of the Poet, as supported by the worth of the Actors, wrought such impression in the hearts of the plebe, that in short space they excelled in ciuility and gouernement, insomuch that from them all the neighbour Nations drew their patternes of Humanity, as well in the establishing of their lawes, as the reformation of their manners. These *Magi* and *Gymnosophistæ*, that liu'd (as I may say) in the childhood and infancy of the world, before it knew how to speake perfectly, thought euen in those dayes, that Action was the neerest way to plant vnderstanding in the hearts of the ignorant. Yea (but say some) you ought not to confound the habits of either sex, as to let your boyes weare the attires of virgins, &c. To which I answere: The Scriptures are not alwayes to be expounded meerely, according to the letter: (for in such estate stands our mayne Sacramentall Controuersie) but they ought exactly to bee conferred with the purpose they handle. To do as the Sodomites did, vse preposterous lusts in preposterous habits, is in that text flatly and seuerely forbidden: nor can I imagine any man, that hath in him any taste or relish of Christianity, to be guilty of so abhorred a sinne. Besides, it is not probable, that Playes were meant in that text, because we read not of any Playes knowne in that time that *Deuteronomie* was writ,

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among the Children of Israel, nor do I hold it lawfull to beguile the eyes of the world in confounding the shapes of either sex, as to keepe any youth in the habit of a virgin, or any virgin in the shape of a lad, to shroud them from the eyes of their fathers, tutors, or protectors, or to any other sinister intent whatsoeuer. But to see our youths attired in the habit of women, who knowes not what their intents be? who cannot distinguish them by their names, assuredly knowing, they are but to represent such a Lady, at such a time appoynted?

Do not the Vniuersities, the fountaines and well springs of all good Arts, Learning and Documents, admit the like in their Colledges? and they (I assure my selfe) are not ignorant of their true vse. In the time of my residence in *Cambridge*, I haue seene Tragedyes, Comedyes, Historyes, Pastorals and Shewes, publickly acted, in which Graduates of good place and reputation, haue bene specially parted: this is held necessary for the emboldening of their *Iunior* schollers, to arme them with audacity, against they come to bee imployed in any publicke exercise, as in the reading of the Dialecticke, Rhetoricke, Ethicke, Mathematicke, the Physicke, or Metaphysicke Lectures, It teacheth audacity to the bashfull Grammarian, beeing newly admitted into the priuate Colledge, and after matriculated and entred as a member of the Vniuersity, and makes him a bold Sophister, to argue *pro et contra*, to compose his Sillogismes, Cathegoricke, or Hypotheticke (simple or compound) to reason and frame a sufficient argument to proue his questions, or to defend any *axioma*, to distinguish of any Dilemma, & be able to moderate in any Argumentation whatsoeuer.

To come to Rhetoricke, it not onely emboldens a scholler to speake, but instructs him to speake well, and with iudgement, to obserue his comma's, colons, & full poynts, his parentheses, his breathing spaces, and distinctions, to keepe a decorum in his countenance, neither to frowne when he should smile, nor to make vnseemely and disgui-

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ſed faces in the deliuery of his words, not to ſtare with his eies, draw awry his mouth, confoũd his voice in the hollow of his throat, or teare his words haſtily betwixt his teeth, neither to buffet his deske like a mad-man, nor ſtand in his place like a liueleſſe Image, demurely plodding, & without any ſmooth & formal motiõ. It inſtructs him to fit his phraſes to his action, and his action to his phraſe, and his pronuntiation to them both.

Tully in his booke *ad Caium Herennium*, requires fiue things in an Orator, *Inuention*, *Diſpoſition*, *Eloquution* *Memory*, and *Pronuntiation*, yet all are imperfect without the ſixt, which is *Action*: for be his inuention neuer ſo fluent and exquiſite, his diſpoſition and order neuer ſo compoſed and formall, his eloquence, and elaborate phraſes neuer ſo materiall and pithy, his memory neuer ſo firme & retentiue, his pronuntiation neuer ſo muſicall and plauſiue, yet without a comely and elegant geſture, a gratious and a bewitching kinde of action, a naturall and a familiar motion of the head, the hand, the body, and a moderate and fit countenance ſutable to all the reſt, I hold all the reſt as nothing. A deliuery & ſweet actiõ is the gloſſe & beauty of any diſcourſe that belongs to a ſcholler. And this is the action behoouefull in any that profeſſe this quality, not to vſe any impudent or forced motion in any part of the body, no rough, or other violent geſture, nor on the contrary, to ſtand like a ſtiffe ſtarcht man, but to qualifie euery thing according to the nature of the perſon perſonated: for in ouer-acting trickes, and toyling too much in the anticke habit of humors, men of the ripeſt deſert, greateſt opinions, and beſt reputations, may breake into the moſt violent abſurdities. I take not vpon me to teach, but to aduiſe: for it becomes my *Iuniority* rather to be pupild my ſelfe, then to inſtruct others.

To proceed, and to looke into thoſe men that profeſſe themſelues aduerſaries to this quality, they are none of the graueſt, and moſt ancient Doctors of the Academy, but onely

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onely a ſort of finde-faults, ſuch as intereſt their prodigall tongues in all mens affaires without reſpect. Theſe I haue heard as liberally in their ſuperficiall cenſures, taxe the exerciſes performed in their Colledges, as theſe acted on our publicke ſtages, not looking into the true & direct vſe of either, but ambitiouſly preferring their owne preſumptuous humors, before the profound and authenticall iudgements of all the learned Doctors of the Vniuerſitie. Thus you ſee, that touching the antiquity of Actors and Acting, they haue not beene new lately begot by any vpſtart inuention, but I haue deriued them from the firſt Olimpiads, and I ſhall continue the vſe of them euen till this preſent age. And ſo much touching their antiquity.

Pars ſupereſt cœpti: pars eſt exhauſta laboris.

The end of the firſt Booke.

OF ACTORS, AND their ancient Dignitie.

The Second Booke.

IVLIVS CÆSAR, the famous Conquerour, discoursing with *Marcus Cicero*, the as famous Orator, amongst many other matters debated, It pleased the Emperour to aske his opinion of the Histriones, the players of *Rome*, pretending some cauell against them, as men whose imployment in the Common-weale was vnnecessary: to whom *Cicero* answered thus: Content thee *Cæsar*, there bee many heads busied & bewitched with these pastimes now in *Rome*, which otherwise would be inquisitiue after thee and thy greatnesse. Which answere, how sufficiently the Emperour approued, may bee coniectured by the many guifts bestowed, and priuiledges and Charters after granted to men of that quality. Such was likewise the opinion of a great statesman of this land, about the time that certaine bookes were called in question. Doubtlesse there be many men of that temper, who were they not carried away, and weaned from their owne corrupt and bad disposition, and by accidentall meanes remoued and altered from their dangerous and sullen intendments, would be found apt and prone to many notorious and trayterous practises. Kings & Monarches are by God placed and inthroaned *supra nos*, aboue vs, & we are to regard them as the Sun from whom we receiue the light to liue vnder, whose beauty & brightnesse we may onely admire, not meddle with: *Ne ludamus*

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cum Dijs, they that ſhoot at the ſt rres ouer their heads, their arrowes fall directly downe and wound themſelues. But this alluſion may bee better referred to the vſe of action promiſed in our third Treatiſe. Then to their Dignity, which next and immediatly (by Gods grace) our purpoſe is to handle.

The word *Tragedy*, is deriued from the Greeke word τραγος, *Caper* a goat, becauſe the goat being a beaſt moſt iniurious to the vines, was ſacrificed to *Bacchus*: Heer upon *Diodorus* writes, that Tragedies had their firſt names from the oblations due to *Bacchus*; or elſe of τρυξ, a kinde of painting, which the Tragedians of the old time vſed to ſtayne their faces with. By the cenſure of *Horace*, *Theſpis* was the firſt Tragicke writer.

Horace, Arte Poetica.

Ignotum Tragicæ genus inveniſſe Camenæ
Dicitur, & plauſtris vexiſſe poëmata Theſpis.

The vnknowne Tragicke Muſe Theſpis *firſt ſought,*
And her high Poëms in her Chariot brought.

This *Theſpis* was an *Athenian* Poet, borne in *Theſpina*, a free towne in *Bœtia* by *Helicon*, of him the nine Muſes were called *Theſpiades*. But by the cenſure of *Quintilian*, *Æſchiles* was before him, but after them *Sophocles* and *Euripides* clothed their Tragedies in better ornament. *Liuius Andronicus* was the firſt that writ any *Roman* Tragedy, in which kinde of poëſie *Accius*, *Pacuvius*, *Seneca*, and *Ouidius* excelled.

Poltd. Virgil.

Ouid, Amorum. lib. 2. Eleg. 18.

Sceptra tamen ſumpſi curáq; Tragedia noſtra,
Creuit, at huic operi quamlibet aptus eram.

The ſceptred Tragedy then proou'd our wit,
And to that worke we found vs apt and fit.

Againe, in his fift Booke *de triſtibus Eleg.* 8.

Carmen quod veſtro ſaltari noſtra Theatro
Verſibus & plaudi ſcribis (amice) meis.

Deere friend thou writ'ſt our Muſe is' mongſt yon ſong,
And in your Theaters with plaudits rong.

Likewiſe

Likewiſe in his Epiſtle to *Auguſtus*, writ from the ponticke Iſland, whither he was baniſht.

Et dedimus tragicis ſcriptum regale Cothurnis,
Quæq; grauis debet verba Cothurnus habet.

With royall ſtile ſpeakes our Cothurnate Muſe,
A buskind phraſe in buskin'd playes we vſe.

The word *Comedy* is deriued from the Greeke word Κωμος a ſtreet, and ωδη, *Cantus*, a ſong, a ſtreet ſong, as ſignifying there was euer mirth in thoſe ſtreets where Comedies moſt floriſht.

Hæc paces habuere bonæ ventiq; ſecundi.

In this kinde *Ariſtophanes*, *Empolis*, *Cratinus* were famous, after them *Menander* and *Philemon*: ſucceeding them *Ciciliius*, *Neuius*, *Plautus* and *Terentius*.

Muſaq; Turani tragicis innixa Cothurnis
Et tua cum ſocco, Muſa, Meliſſe leuis.

Turanus tragicke buskin grac'd the Play,
Meliſſa'es Comicke ſhooe made lighter way.

The ancient Hiſtriographers write, that among the *Greekes* there were diuers places of exerciſes, appointed for Poets, ſome at the graue of *Theſeus*, others at *Helicon*, where they in Comedies and Tragedies contended for ſeueral priſes, where *Sophocles* was aiudged victor ouer *Æſchilus*: There were others in the Citty of *Elis*, where *Menander* was foyled by *Philomene*. In the ſame kinde *Heſiod* is ſayd to haue triumpht ouer *Homer*. So *Corinna* for her excellencies in theſe inuentions, (called *Muſealyrica*) excelled *Pindarus* the *Theban* Poet, for which ſhe was fiue times crowned with garlands. *Alex. Metapol.*

Theaters.

The firſt publicke Theater was by *Dionyſius* built in *Athens*, it was faſhioned in the manner of a ſemi-circle, or halfe-moone, whoſe galleries & degrees were reared from the ground, their ſtaires high, in the midſt of which did ariſe the ſtage, beſide, ſuch a conuenient diſtance from the earth, that the audience aſſembled might eaſily behold

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the whole proiect without impediment. From this the *Romanes* had their first patterne, which at the first not being roof't, but lying open to all weathers, *Quintus Catulus* was the first that caused the out-side to bee couered with linnen cloth, and the in-side to bee hung round with Curtens of silke. But when *Marcus Scaurus* was *Ædilis*, hee repaired it, and supported it round with pillers of Marble.

Caius Curio, at the solemne obsequies of his father, erected a famous Theater of Timber, in so strange a forme, that on two seuerall stages, two sundry playes might bee acted at once, and yet the one bee no hinderance or impediment to the other; and when hee so pleased the whole frame was artificially composed to meet in the middest, which made an Amphi-theater.

Pompey the great, after his victories against *Mithridates*, King of *Pontus*, saw in the Citty *Mitelene* a Theater of another forme, and after his triumphes and returne to *Rome*, he raised one after the same patterne, of free stone, of that vastnesse and receit, that within his spaciousnesse it was able at once to receiue fourescore thousand people, euery one to sit, see and heare.

In emulation of this sumptuous and gorgious building *Iulius Cæsar*, successor to *Pompeyes* greatnesse, exceeded him in his famous Architecture, hee raised an Amphitheater, *Campo Martio*, in the field of *Mars*, which as farre excelled *Pompeyes*, as *Pompeyes* did exceed *Caius Curioes*, *Curioes* that of *Marcus Scaurus*, *Scaurus* that of *Quintus Catulus*, or *Catulus* that which was first made in *Athens* by *Dionysius*: for the Basses, Columnes, Pillars, and Pyramides were all of hewed Marble, the couerings of the stage, which wee call the heauens (where vpon any occasion their Gods descended) were Geometrically supported by a Giant-like *Atlas*, whom the Poëts for his Astrology, feigne to beare heauen on his shoulders, in which an artificiall Sunne and Moone of extraordinary aspect and brightnesse had their diurnall, and nocturnall motions; so had the starres their true and

cœlestiall course; so had the spheares, which in their continuall motion made a most sweet and rauishing harmony: Here were the Elements and planets in their degrees, the sky of the *Moone*, the sky of *Mercury*, *Venus*, *Sol*, *Mars*, *Iupiter and Saturne*; the starres, both fixed and wandering: and aboue all these, the first mouer, or *primum mobile*, there were the 12 signes; the lines Equinoctiall and Zodiacal, the Meridian circle, or Zenith, the Orizon circle, or Emisphere, the Zones torrid & frozen, the poles articke & antarticke, with all other tropickes, orbs, lines, circles, the *Solstitium* & all other motions of the stars, signes, & planets. In briefe, in that little compasse were comprehended the perfect model of the firmament, the whole frame of the heauens, with all grounds of Astronomicall coniecture. From the roofe grew a louuer, or turret, of an exceedding altitude, from which an enfigne of silke waued continually, *Pendebant vela Theatro*. But lest I waste too much of that compendiousnesse I haue promised in my discourse, in idle descriptions, I leaue you to iudge the proportion of the body by the making of this one limbe, euery piller, seat, foot-post, staire, gallery, & whatsoeuer else belongs to the furnishing of such a place, being in cost, substance, forme, and artificiall workmanship, most sutable. The floore, stage, roofe, out-side, & in-side, as costly as the *Pantheon* or *Capitols*. In the principall galleries were special remote, selected & chosen seats for the Emperour, *patres conscripti*, Dictators, Consuls, Pretors, Tribunes, Triumviri, Decemviri, Ediles, Curules, and other Noble Officers among the Senators: all other roomes were free for the plebe, or multitude. To this purpose I introduce these famous Edifices, as wondring at their cost & state, thus intimating, that if the quality of Acting, were (as some propose) altogether vnworthy, why for the speciall practise, and memorable imployment of the same, were founded so many rare and admirable monuments: and by whom were they erected? but by the greatest princes of their times, and the most famous and worthiest of them all,

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builded by him that was the greateſt Prince of the world, *Iulius Cæſar*, at what time in his hand he grip't the vniuerſal Empire of the earth. So of *Auguſtus Cæſar*.

Inſpice ludorum ſumptus Auguſte tuorum
Empta tibi magno ——

Behold Auguſtus *the great pompe and ſtate*
Of theſe thy Playes payd deere for, at hye rate.

Hæc tu ſpectaſti ſpectandaq; ſæpe dedisti.

And could any inferiour quality bee more worthily eſteemed or noblier graced, then to haue Princes of ſuch magnificence and ſtate to beſtow on them places of ſuch port and countenance, had they been neuer well regarded, they had been neuer ſo ſufficiently prouided for, nor would ſuch worthy princes haue ſtriued who ſhould (by their greateſt expence and prouiſion) haue done them the ampleſt dignity, had they not with incredible fauour regarded the quality. I will not trauerſe this too farre, leaſt I incurre ſome ſuſpition of ſelfe-loue, I rather leaue it to the fauourable conſideration of the wiſe, though to the peruerſneſſe of the ignorant, who had they any taſte either of Poeſie, Phyloſophy, or Hiſtoricall Antiquity, would rather ſtand mated at their owne impudent ignorance, then againſt ſuch noble, and notable examples ſtand in publicke defiance.

I read of a Theater built in the midſt of the riuer *Tyber*, ſtanding on pillers and arches, the foundation wrought vnder water like London-bridge, the Nobles and Ladyes in their Barges and Gondelayes, landed at the very ſtayres of the galleryes. After theſe they compoſed others, but differing in forme from the Theater, or Amphi-theater, and euery ſuch was called *Circus*, the frame Globe-like, & merely round.

Circus in hanc exit clamataq; palma Theatris.

And the yeare from the firſt building of *Rome*, fiue hundred threeſcore and ſeuen, what time *Spurius Poſthumus Albinus*

Albinus, and *Quintus Martius Philippus*, were Consuls, *Nero* made one, and the noble *Flaminius* another; but the greatest was founded by *Tarquinius Priscus*, and was called *Circus maximus*: In this the Gladiators practised, the wideneſſe and ſpaciouſneſſe was ſuch, that in it they fought at Barriers, and many times ran at tilt. *Dion* records eighteene Elephants ſlaine at once in one Theater. More particularly to ſuruey the rarer Monuments of *Rome*, neere to the *Pantheon* (the Temple of the *Roman* Gods) at the diſcent from the hil *Capitolinus*, lies the great *Forum*, by which is ſcituate the great Amphi-theater of *Tytus*, firſt erected by *Veſpatian*, but after (almoſt ruined by fire) by the *Roman Tytus* rarely reëdified. It is called *Colliſeus*, alſo a *Cauea*, which ſignifies a ſcaffold, alſo *Arena*, a place of combate, by *Siluianus* and *Prudentius*, which name *Tertullian*, *Pliny*, *Ouid*, *Firmicus*, and *Apuleius* likewiſe giue it. It had the title of *Circus*, *Caula* and *ſtadium*, by *Suetonius*, *Capitolinus* and *Arcadius*. *Caſſianus* affirmes theſe Theaters conſecrated to *Diana Taurica*, *Tertullian*, to *Mars* and *Diana*, *Martiall* to *Iupiter Latiaris*, and to *Stigian Pluto*, whoſe opinion *Minutius*, & *Prudentius* approue. The firſt ſtructures were by the Tribune *Curio*, which *Dio*, *lib.* 37. affirmes. *Vitruvius lib.* 5. ſaith, *Multa Theatra, Romæ ſtructa quotannis*. Of *Iulius Cæſars* Amphi-theater *Campo Martio*, *Dio Caſſius* records, which *Auguſtus* after patronizied, as *Victor* remembers of them, whoſe charge *Statilius Taurus* aſſiſted, of whom *Dio* ſpeaketh thus ὁ ταυρος στατιλιος θεατρον, &c. *anno urbis*, DCCXXV. *Pub. Victor* forgets not *Circus Flaminij*, and *Suetonius* remembers one builded by *Caligula*, at *Septa*, whoſe building *Claudius* at firſt interdicted. *Nero* erected a magnificent Theater in the field of *Mars*. *Suetonius lib. Ner.* 12.

Ammianus, lib. 29.

Pliny. lib. 36.

Dio Caſſius lib. 43.

Dio. lib. 51

Suetonius cap 21.

Tacitus lib. 13. *Annalium.*

Publius Victor ſpeakes further of a *Caſtrenſe Theatrum*, a Theater belõging to the Campe in the Coũtry of the *Æſquiles*, built by *Tiberius Cæſar*, and of *Pompies* Theater *Pliny* witneſſeth. The great Theater of *Statilius* being in greateſt vſe, was burnt in the time of *Nero*, which *Xiphilinus* thus

Pliny, lib. 36. *cap.* 15.

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thus speakes of, το τε καλαπετιον το προς αγορην και το θεατριον το παρα τον ιχθυν. This was built in the middeſt of the old Citty, and after the combuſtion repaired by *Veſpatian*, *Conſulatu ſuo* 8. whoſe coyne of one ſide, beares the expreſſe figure of his Theater, yet was it onely begun by him, but perfected by his ſonne *Tytus*. *Eutropius* and *Caſſiodorus*, attribute this place ſoly to *Titus*, but *Aurelius Victor* giues him onely the honour of the perfecting a place ſo exquiſitely begun: this after was repaired by *Marcus Anthonius Pius*, by whoſe coſt ſayth *Capitolinus*, the Temple of *Hadrianus* was repaired, and the great Theater reëdified, which *Heliogabalus*, by the teſtimony of *Lampridius*, patronized, and after the Senate of *Rome*, tooke to their protection, vnder the *Gordians*.

Touching Theaters without *Rome*, *Lypſius* records *Theatra circa Romani, extructa paſſim*, euen in *Ieruſalem*, *Herodes magnificus & illuſtris rex non vno loco Iudeæ Amphi-theatra edificauit, exſtruxit in ipſa vrbe ſacra*, ιν τη μεση (as *Ioſephus* ſaith) θεατρον μεγιστον. *Herod* a magnificent and illuſtrious King, not in one place of *Iudea*, erected Amphitheaters, but euen in the holy Citty hee built one of greateſt receit. Alſo in *Greece*, *Aſia*, *Affricke*, *Spaine*, *France*: nor is there any prouince in which their ancient ſtructures do not yet remaine, or their periſhing ruines are not ſtill remembred. In *Italy*, *ad Lyrim campaniæ Fluvium iuxta Minturnas*, remaines part of an ample Amphi-theater.

At *Puteolis*, a City by the ſea-ſide in *Campania*, 8 miles from *Naples*, one.

At *Capua*, a magnificent one of ſollid Marble.

At *Alba* in *Italy*, one.

At *Ocriculum* in *Vmbria* one.

At *Verona*, one moſt beautifull.

At *Florens*, one whoſe compaſſe yet remaines.

At *Athens* in *Greece*, one of Marble.

At *Pola* in *Iſtria*, by the *Hadriaticke* ſea, one deſcribed by *Sebaſtian Serlius*.

At *Hyſpalis* in *Spaine*, one built without the walles of the Citty

In *Turmadee* at *Vesuna* one of squared stone, the length 30. perches, or poles, the bredth 20.

At *Arelate* one.

At *Burdegall* one.

At *Nemaus* one, remembred by *Euseb. in Ecclesiastica Historia.*

At *Lygeris* one.

Another among the *Heluetians.*

The *Veroneuse Theatrum Marmoreum*, erected before the time of *Augustus*, as *Torellius Serayna* in his description of *Verona*, records: but *Cyriacus Aneonitanus* reports it built in the nine and thirtieth yeare of *Octauian. Carolus Sigonius* referres it to the reigne of *Maximinian*, who saith, *Maximinian* built Theaters in *Mediolanum Aquilea*, and *Brixium.* The like *Cornelius Tacitus* 2. *Hist.* remembers in *Placentia*, but the descriptiō of the *Verona* Theater *Lewinus Kersmakerus* sets downe. This the great King *Francis anno* 1539 gaue to certaine Actors, who thirty dayes space together, represented in the same the Acts of the Apostles, nor was it lawfull by the Edict of the King for any man to remoue any stone within thirty poles of his scituation, lest they should endanger the foundation of the Theater. *Sicon. lib. Hist. Occident.*

The like haue been in *Venice*, *Millan*, *Padua*. In *Paris* there are diuers now in vse by the *French* Kings Comedians, as the *Burgonian*, and others. Others in *Massilia*, in *Treuers*, in *Magontia*, in *Agripina*, and infinite Cities of *Greece*, *Thebes*, *Carthage*, *Delphos*, *Creet*, *Paphos*, *Epyrus*, also in the Citie *Tydena*, so at *Ciuil* in *Spaine*, and at *Madrill*, with others.

At the entertainement of the Cardinall *Alphonsus*, and the Infant of *Spaine* into the Low-countryes, they were presented at *Antwerpe*, with sundry pageants and playes: the King of *Denmarke*, father to him that now reigneth, entertained into his seruice, a company of *English Comedians*, commended vnto him by the honourable the Earle of *Leicester*: the Duke of *Brounswicke*, and the *Landsgraue* of *Hessen* retaine in their Courts certaine of ours, of the same quality. Archduke *Alphonsus.*

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But among the *Romans* they were in higheſt reputation: for in compariſon of their playes, they neuer regarded any of their ſolemnities, there *ludi funebres*, there *Floralia*, *Cerealia*, *Fugalia*, *Bachinalia*, or *Lupercalia*.

Stowe. And amongſt vs, one of our beſt *Engliſh* Chroniclers records, that when *Edward* the fourth would ſhew himſelfe in publicke ſtate to the view of the people, hee repaired to his Palace at S. *Iohnes*, where he accuſtomed to ſee the Citty Actors. And ſince then, that houſe by the Princes free gift, hath belonged to the office of the Reuels, where our Court playes haue beene in late daies yearely reherſed, perfected, and corrected before they come to the publike view of the Prince and the Nobility. *Ouid* ſpeaking of the Tragicke Muſe, thus writes.

Venit & ingenti violenta tragedia paſſu,
Fronte comæ torua palla iacebat humi
Læua manus ſceptrum late regale tenebat,
Lydius apta pedum vincta cothurnus habet.

Then came the Tragicke Muſe with a proud pace,
Meaſuring her ſlow ſtrides with maieſticke grace.
Her long traine ſweepes the earth, and ſhe doth ſtand,
With buſkin'd legge, rough brow, and ſceptred hand.

Well knew the poet what eſtimation ſhe was in with *Auguſtus*, whē he deſcribes her holding in her left hand a ſceptre. Now to recite ſome famous *Actors* that liued in the preceding ages: the firſt Comediās were *Cincius* & *Faliſcus*, the firſt Tragedians were *Minutius*, & *Prothonius*. *Elius Donatus* in his preface to *Terence* his *Andrea*, ſaith that in that Comedy *Lucius Attilius*, *Latinus Preneſtinus*, and *Lucius Ambiuius Turpio* were Actors: this Comedy was dedicated to *Cibil*, & ſuch were called *ludi Megalenſes*, acted in the yeare that M. *Fuluius* was Edilis, & *Quintus Minutius Valerius*, & M. *Glabrio* were Curules, which were Coūſellers & chiefe officers in *Rome*, ſo called becauſe they cuſtomably ſate in chayres

Cincius,
Faliſcus,
Minutius.
Prothonius.
L. Attilius.
Latinus.
Preneſtinus.
Lucius.
Ambiuius Turpio.

of

of Iuory. The songs that were sung in this Comedy were set by *Flaccus*, the sonne of *Clodius*. *Terence* his *Eunuchus* or second Comedy was acted in the yeare L. *Posthumus*, and L. *Cornelius* were Edil. *Curules*, *Marcus Valerius*, & *Caius Fannius* Consuls. The yeare from the building of *Rome* 291. in his Adelphi one *Protinus* acted, & was highly applauded, in his Heeyra *Iulius Seruius*. *Cicero* commends one *Rupilius* a rare Tragedian: I read of another called *Arossus*, another called *Theocrines*, who purchased him a great applause in the playes called *Terentini*. There were other playes in *Rome*, called *Actia* and *Pythia*, made in the honour of *Apollo*, for killing the Dragon *Python*. In those one *Æsopus* bare the praise, a man generally esteemed, who left behind him much substance, which *Clodius* his sonne after possest.

Flaccus.

Protinus.
L. Seruius.

Offic. 1.

Rupilius.
Arossius.
Theocrines.

AEsopus.

Quæ grauis Æsopus, quæ doctus Rossius egit.

Labericus was an excellent Poet, and a rare Actor, who writ a booke of the gesture & action to be vsed by the Tragedians and Comedians in performance of euery part in his natiue humor. *Plautus* himselfe was so inamored of the Actors in his dayes, that hee published many excellent and exquisite Comedies, yet extant. *Aristotle* commends one *Theodoretes* to be the best Tragedian in his time. This in the presence of *Alexander* personated *Achilles*, which so delighted the Emperour, that hee bestowed on him a pension of *quinque mille Drachmæ*, fiue thousand Drachmaes, and euery thousand Drachmaes are twenty nine pounds, three shillings, foure pence sterling.

Labericus.

Theodoretes.

Rossius, whom the eloquent Orator, & excellent statesman of *Rome*, *Marcus Cicero*, for his elegant pronuntiatiõ & formall gesture called his iewell, had from the common Tresury of the *Roman* Exchequer, a daily pention allowed him of so many Sestertij as in our coine amount to 16 pound & a marke, or thereabouts, which yearely did arise to any noble mans reuenues. So great was the fame of this *Roscius*, and so good his estimation, that learned *Cato* made a question whether *Cicero* could write better then *Roscius* could

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ſpeake and act, or *Roſcius* ſpeake and act better then *Cicero* write. Many times when they had any important orations, to be with an audible and loud voyce deliuered to the people, they imployed the tongue and memory of this excellent Actor, to whom for his worth, the Senate granted ſuch large exhibition. ——*quæ perincere voces,*

Enaluere ſonum referunt quem noſtra Theatra,
Gorganum mugire putes nemus aut mare Thuſcum,
Tanto cum ſtrepitu ludi ſpectantur & artes.
What voyce can be compared with the ſound,
Our Theaters from their deepe concaues ſend,
For their reuerberate murmures ſeeme to drownd
The Gorgan wood when the proud windes contend.
Or when rough ſtormes the Thuſcan billowes raiſe,
With ſuch loud ioy they ring our Arts and Playes.

To omit all the Doctors, Zawnyes, Pantaloones, Harlakeenes, in which the *French*, but eſpecially the *Italians*, haue beene excellent, and according to the occaſion offered to do ſome right to our Engliſh Actors, as *Knell*, *Bentley*, *Mils*, *Wilſon*, *Croſſe*, *Lanam*, and others: theſe, ſince I neuer ſaw them, as being before my time, I cannot (as an eye-witneſſe of their deſert) giue them that applauſe, which no doubt, they worthily merit, yet by the report of many iuditial auditors, their performance of many parts haue been ſo abſolute, that it were a kinde of ſinne to drowne their worths in Lethe, and not commit their (almoſt forgotten) names to eternity. Heere I muſt needs remember *Tarleton*, in his time gratious with the Queene his ſoueraigne, and in the peoples generall applauſe, whom ſucceeded *Wil. Kemp*, as wel in the fauour of her Maieſty, as in the opinion & good thoughts of the generall audience. *Gabriel*, *Singer*, *Pope*, *Phillips*, *Sly*, all the right I can do them, is but this, that though they be dead, their deſerts yet liue in the remembrance of many. Among ſo many dead let me not forget one yet aliue in his time the moſt worthy famous, Maiſter *Edward Allen*. To omit theſe, as alſo ſuch as for diuers imperfections

imperfections, may be thought insufficient for the quality. Actors should be men pick'd out personable, according to the parts they present, they should be rather schollers, that though they cānot speake well, know how to speake, or else to haue that volubility, that they can speake well, though they vnderstand not what, & so both imperfections may by instructiōs be helped & amended: but where a good tongue & a good conceit both faile, there can neuer be good actor. I also could wish, that such as are cōdemned for their licentiousnesse, might by a generall consent bee quite excluded our society: for as we are men that stand in the broad eye of the world, so should our manners, gestures, and behauiours, sauour of such gouernment and modesty, to deserue the good thoughts and reports of all men, and to abide the sharpest censures euen of those that are the greatest opposites to the quality. Many amongst vs, I know, to be of substance, of gouernment, of sober liues, and temperate carriages, house-keepers, and contributary to all duties enioyned them, equally with them that are rank't with the most bountifull; and if amongst so many of sort, there be any few degenerate from the rest in that good demeanor, which is both requisite & expected at their hands, let me entreat you not to censure hardly of all for the misdeeds of some, but rather to excuse vs, as *Ouid* doth the generality of women.

Parcite paucarum diffundere crimen in omnes,
Spectetur meritis quæq; puella suis.
For some offenders (that perhaps are few)
Spare in your thoughts to censure all the crew,
Since euery breast containes a sundry spirit,
Let euery one be censur'd as they merit.

Others there are of whom should you aske my opinion, I must refer you to this, *Consule Theatrum*. Here I might take fit opportunity to reckon vp all our *English* writers, & compare them with the *Greeke*, *French*, *Italian*, & *Latine* Poets, not only in their *Pastorall*, *Historicall*, *Elegeicall*, & *Heroicall* Poēms, but in their *Tragicall*, & *Comicall* subiects, but it was

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my chance to happen on the like learnedly done by an approued good ſcholler, in a booke called *Wits Comon-wealth*, to which treatiſe I wholy referre you, returning to our preſent ſubiect. *Iulius Caſar* himſelfe for his pleaſure became an Actor, being in ſhape, ſtate, voyce, iudgement, and all other occurrents, exterior and interior excellent. Amongſt many other parts acted by him in perſon, it is recorded of him, that with generall applauſe in his owne Theater he played *Hercules Furens*, and amongſt many other arguments of his compleatneſſe, excellence, and extraordinary care in his action, it is thus reported of him: Being in the depth of a paſſion, one of his ſeruants (as his part then fell out) preſenting *Lychas*, who before had from *Deianeira* brought him the poyſoned ſhirt, dipt in the bloud of the Centaure *Neſſus*: he in the middeſt of his torture and fury, finding this *Lychas* hid in a remote corner (appoynted him to creep into of purpoſe) although he was, as our Tragedians vſe, but ſeemingly to kill him by ſome falſe imagined wound, yet was *Ceſar* ſo extremely carryed away with the violence of his practiſed fury, and by the perfect ſhape of the madneſſe of *Hercules*, to which he had faſhioned all his actiue ſpirits, that he ſlew him dead at his foot, & after ſwoong him *terq; quaterq;* (as the Poet ſayes) about his head. It was the manner of their Emperours, in thoſe dayes, in their publicke Tragedies to chooſe out the fitteſt amongſt ſuch, as for capital offences were condemned to dye, and imploy them in ſuch parts as were to be kil'd in the Tragedy, wh- of themſelues would make ſuit rather ſo to dye with reſolution, and by the hands of ſuch princely *Actors*, then otherwiſe to ſuffer a ſhamefull & moſt deteſtable end. And theſe were Tragedies naturally performed. And ſuch *Caius Caligula, Claudius Nero, Vitellius, Domitianus, Comodus*, & other Emperours of *Rome*, vpon their feſtiuals and holy daies of greateſt conſecration, vſed to act. Therefore M. *Kid* in the *Spaniſh* Tragedy, vpon occaſion preſenting it ſelfe, thus writes.

Why Nero thought it no diſparagement,

And

And Kings and Emperours haue tane delight,
To make experience of their wits in playes.

Theſe exerciſes, as traditions, haue beene ſince (though in better manner) continued through all ages, amongſt all the nobleſt Nations of the earth. But I haue promiſed to be altogether compendious, preſuming that what before is diſcourſt, may for the practiſe of playes, their *Antiquity*, and *Dignity* be altogether ſufficient. I omit the ſhewes and ceremonies euen in theſe times generally vſed amongſt the Catholikes, in which by the Churchmen & moſt religious, diuers pageants, as of the Nativity, Paſſion, and Aſcention, with other Hiſtoricall places of the Bible, are at diuers times & ſeaſons of the yeare vſually celebrated; *ſed hæc prætermitto*. In the yeare of the world 4207. of Chriſt 246. *Origin* writ certaine godly Epiſtles to *Philip*, then Emperour of *Rome*, who was the firſt Chriſtian Emperour, and in his life I reade, that in the fourth yeare of his reigne, which was the 1000. yeare after the building of *Rome*, he ſolemnized that yeare, as a Iubilee with ſumptuous pageants and playes. *Homer*, the moſt excellent of all Poets, compoſed his Illiads in the ſhape of a Tragedy, his *Odiſſeas* like a Comedy. *Virgil* in the firſt of his *Æneiads*, in his deſcription of *Didoes Carthage*.

——— hic alta Theatris
Fundamenta locant alij immaneſq; Columnas,
Rupibus excidunt ſcenis decora alta futuris.

Which proues, that in thoſe dayes immediatly after the ruine of *Troy*, when *Carthage* had her firſt foundation, they built Theaters with ſtately columnes of ſtone, as in his deſcription may appeare. I haue ſufficiently diſcourſt of the firſt Theaters, and in whoſe times they were erected, euen till the reigne of *Iulius Cæſar*, the firſt Emperour, and how they continued in their glory from him till the reigne of *Marcus Aurelius* the 23 Emperour, and from him euen to theſe times. Now to proue they were in as high eſtimation at *Lacedemon*, and *Athens* two the moſt famous Citties of

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Greece. Cicero in his booke *Cato maior, seu de senectute. Cum Athenis ludis quidam grandis natu in Theatrum venisset, &c.* An ancient Citizen comming into one of the *Athenian* Theaters to see the pastimes there solemnized (which shewes that the most antient and graue frequented them) by reason of the throng, no man gaue him place or reuerence: but the same Citizen being implyo'd in an Embassy to *Lacedemon*, and coming like a priuate man into the Theater, the generall multitude arose at once, and with great ceremonious reuerence gaue his age place. This *Cicero* alledges to proue the reuerence due to age, and this I may fitly introduce to the approbation of my present subiect. Moreouer, this great Statesman of *Rome*, at whose exile twenty thousand of the chiefest *Roman* Citizens wore mourning apparrel, oftentimes commends *Plautus*, calling him *Plautus noster*, and *Atticorum antiqua Comedia*, where he proceeds further to extoll *Æsopus*, for personating *Aiax*, and the famous Actor *Rupilius*, in *Epigonus*, *Medea*, *Menalip*, *Clytemnestra* and *Antiopa*, proceeding in the same place with this worthy & graue sentence, *Ergo Histrio hoc videbit in scena, quod non videbit sapiens in vita?* shall a Tragedian see that in his Scene which a wise man cannot see in the course of his life? So in another of his workes, amongst many instructions to his sonne *Marcus*, he applauds *Turpio Ambivius* for his action, *Statius*, *Nevius*, and *Plautus* for their writing. *Ouid* in *Augustum.*

Luminibusq; tuis totus quibus vtitur orbis,
Scenica vidisti lusus adulteria.

Those eyes with which you all the world survay,
See in your Theaters our Actors play.

Augustus Cæsar, because he would haue some memory of his loue to those places of pastime, reared in *Rome* two stately Obelisci, or Pyramides, one in *Iulius Cæsars* Temple in the field of *Mars*, another in the great Theater, called *Circus Maximus*, built by *Flaminius*: these were in height an hundred

hundred cubits a peece, in bredth foure cubits, they were first raised by King *Pheron* in the Temple of the Sunne, and after remoued to *Rome* by *Augustus*: the occasion of their first composure was this: *Pheron* for some great crime, committed by him in his youth against the Gods, was by them strooke blinde, and so continued the space of ten yeares: but after by a reuelation in the Citty *Bucis*, it was told, that if he washt his eyes in the water of a woman that was chaste, and neuer adulterately touch't with any saue her husband, he should againe recouer his sight: the King first tride his wife, then many other of the most graue and best reputed matrons, but continued still in despaire, till at length hee met with one vertuous Lady, by whose chastity his sight was restored; whom (hauing first commanded his *Queene* and the rest to be consumed with fire) he after married. *Pheron* in memory of this, builded his two Pyramides, after remoued to *Rome* by

AVGVSTVS.

Sanctaq; maiestas & erat venerabile nomen,
Vatibus——

The end of the second Booke.

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OF ACTORS, AND the true vse of their quality.

The Third Booke.

TRagedies and Comedies, saith *Donatus*, had their beginning *à rebus diuinis*, from diuine sacrifices, they differ thus: In Comedies, *turbulenta prima, tranquilla vltima*, In Tragedyes, *tranquilla prima, turbulenta vltima*, Comedies begin in trouble, and end in peace; Tragedies begin in calmes, and end in tempest. Of Comedies there be three kindes, mouing Comedies, called *Motoriæ*, standing Comedies, called *Stataria*, or mixt betwixt both, called *Mistæ*: they are distributed into foure parts, the *Prologue*, that is, the preface; the *Protasis*, that is, the proposition, which includes the first Act, and presents the Actors; the *Epitasis*, which is the businesse and body of the Comedy; the last the *Catastrophe*, and conclusion: the deffinition of the Comedy, according to the *Latins*: a dicourse consisting of diuers institutions, comprehending ciuill and domesticke things, in which is taught, what in our liues and manners is to be followed, what to bee auoyded, the Greekes define it thus: Κωμωδια ἐστιν ἰδιωτικῶν καὶ πολιτικῶν πραγμάτων ἀχὴν ἔχουσα τερπνήν. *Cicero* saith, a Comedy is the imitation of life, the glasse of custome, and the image of truth, in *Athens* they had their first originall. The ancient Comedians vsed to attire their actors thus: the old men in white, as the most ancient of all, the yong men in party-coloured garments, to note their diuersity of thoughts, their slaues and seruants in thin and

bare

bare veſture, either to note their pouerty, or that they might run the more lighter about their affaires: their Parraſites wore robes that were turned in, and intricately wrapped about them; the fortunate in white, the diſcontented in decayed veſture, or garments, growne out of faſhion; the rich in purple, the poore in crimſon, ſouldiers wore purple iackets, hand-maids the habits of ſtrange virgins, bawds, pide coates, and Curtezans, garments of the colour of mud, to denote their couetouſneſſe: the ſtages were hung with rich Arras, which was firſt brought from King *Attalus* into *Rome*: his ſtate-hangings were ſo coſtly, that from him all Tapeſtries, and rich Arras were called *Attalia*. This being a thing ancient as I haue proued it, next of dignity, as many arguments haue confirmed it, and now euen in theſe dayes by the beſt, without exception, fauourably tollerated, why ſhould I yeeld my cenſure, grounded on ſuch firme and eſtabliſht ſufficiency, to any Tower, founded on ſand, any caſtle built in the aire, or any triuiall vpſtart, and meere imaginary opinion.

Oderunt Hilarem triſtes triſtemq; iocoſi.

I hope there is no man of ſo vnſenſible a ſpirit, that can inueigh againſt the true and direct vſe of this quality: Oh but ſay they, the *Romanes* in their time, and ſome in theſe dayes haue abuſed it, and therefore we volly out our exclamations againſt the vſe. Oh ſhallow! Becauſe ſuch a man had his houſe burnt, we ſhall quite condemne the vſe of fire, becauſe one man quaft poyſon, we muſt forbeare to drinke, becauſe ſome haue beene ſhipwrak't, no man ſhall hereafter trafficke by ſea. Then I may as well argue thus: he cut his finger, therefore muſt I weare no knife, vond man fell from his horſe, therefore muſt I trauell a foot; that man ſurfeited, therfore dare not I eate. What can appeare more abſurd then ſuch a groſſe and ſenceleſſe aſſertion? I could turne this vnpoynted weapon againſt his breaſt that aimes it at mine, and reaſon thus: *Roſcius* had a large penſion allowed him by the Senate of *Rome*, why ſhould not an Actor

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of the like desert, haue the like allowance now? or this, the most famous City and Nation in the world held playes in great admiration: *Ergo*, but it is a rule in *Logicke*, *Ex particularibus nihil fit*. These are not the Basses we must build vpon, nor the columnes that must support our architecture.

Et latro, & cautus, precingitur ense viator.
Ille sed insidijs, hic fibi portat opem.
Both theeues and true-men, weapons weare alike:
Th'one to defend, the other comes to strike.

Let vs vse fire to warme vs, not to scortch vs, to make ready our necessaries, not to burne our houses: let vs drinke to quench our thirst, not to surfet; and eate to satisfie nature, not to gormondize.

——Comedia recta si mente legatur,
Constabit nulli posse nocere——
Playes are in vse as they are vnderstood,
Spectators eyes may make them bad or good.

Shall we condemne a generallity for any one particular misconstruction? giue me then leaue to argue thus: Amongst Kings haue there not beene some tyrants? yet the office of a King is the image of the Maiesty of God. Amongst true subiects haue there not crept in some false traitors? euen amongst the twelue there was one *Iudas*, but shall we for his fault, censure worse of the eleuen? God forbid: art thou Prince or Peasant? art thou of the Nobility, or Commonalty? Art thou merchant or Souldier? of the Citty or Country? Art thou Preacher or Auditor? Art thou Tutor or Pupill? There haue beene of thy function bad and good, prophane and holy. I induce these instances to confirme this common argument, that the vse of any generall thing is not for any one particular abuse to be condemned: for if that assertion stood firme, wee should run into many notable inconueniences.

Qui locus est templis angustior hanc quoq; vitet,
In culpam si qua est ingeniosa suam.

To

For Actors.

To proceed to the matter: First, playing is an ornament to the Citty, which ſtrangers of all Nations, repairing hither, report of in their Countries, beholding them here with ſome admiration: for what variety of entertainment can there be in any Citty of Chriſtendome, more then in *London?* But ſome will ſay, this diſh might be very well ſpared out of the banquet: to him I anſwere, *Diogenes*, that vſed too ſeede on rootes, cannot reliſh a March-pane. Secondly, our *Engliſh* tongue, which hath ben the moſt harſh, vneuen, and broken language of the world, part *Dutch*, part *Iriſh*, *Saxon*, *Scotch*, *Welſh*, and indeed a gallimaffry of many, but perfect in none, is now by this ſecondary meanes of playing, continually refined, euery writer ſtriuing in himſelfe to adde a new floriſh vnto it; ſo that in proceſſe, from the moſt rude and vnpoliſht tongue, it is growne to a moſt perfect and compoſed language, and many excellent workes, and elaborate Poems writ in the ſame, that many Nations grow inamored of our tongue (before deſpiſed.) Neither Saphicke, Ionicke, Iambicke, Phaleuticke, Adonicke, Gliconicke, Hexamiter, Tetramitrer, Pentamiter, Aſclepediacke, Choriambicke, nor any other meaſured verſe vſed amongſt the *Greekes*, *Latins*, *Italians*. *French*, *Dutch*, or *Spaniſh* writers, but may be expreſt in *Engliſh*, be it in blanke verſe, or meeter, in Diſtichon, or Hexaſtichon, or in what forme or feet, or what number you can deſire. Thus you ſee to what excellency our refined *Engliſh* is brought, that in theſe daies we are aſhamed of that *Euphony* & eloquence which within theſe 60 yeares, the beſt tongues in the land were proud to pronounce. Thirdly, playes haue made the ignorant more apprehenſiue, taught the vnlearned the knowledge of many famous hiſtories, inſtructed ſuch as cãnot reade in the diſcouery of all our *Engliſh* Chronicles: & what man haue you now of that weake capacity, that cannot diſcourſe of any notable thing recorded euen from *William* the *Conquerour*, nay from the landing of *Brute*, vntill this day, beeing poſſeſt of their true vſe, For, or becauſe

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Playes are writ with this ayme, and carryed with this methode, to teach the ſubiects obedience to their King, to ſhew the people the vntimely ends of ſuch as haue moued tumults, commotions, and inſurrections, to preſent thē with the flouriſhing eſtate of ſuch as liue in obedience, exhorting them to allegeance, dehorting them from all trayterous and fellonious ſtratagems.

Vſe of Tragedies.

Omne genus ſcripti grauitate Tragedia vincit.

If we preſent a Tragedy, we include the fatall and abortiue ends of ſuch as commit notorious murders, which is aggrauated and acted with all the Art that may be, to terrifie men from the like abhorred practiſes. If wee preſent a forreigne Hiſtory, the ſubiect is ſo intended, that in the liues of *Romans*, *Grecians*, or others, either the vertues of our Country-men are extolled, or their vices reproued, as thus, by the example of *Cæſar* to ſtir ſouldiers to valour, & magnanimity: by the fall of *Pompey*, that no man truſt in his owne ſtrength: we preſent *Alexander*, killing his friend in his rage, to reproue raſhneſſe: *Mydas*, choked with his gold, to taxe couetouſneſſe: *Nero* againſt tyranny: *Sardanapalus*, againſt luxury: *Nynus*, againſt ambition, with infinite others, by ſundry inſtances, either animating men to noble attempts, or attaching the conſciences of the ſpectators, finding themſelues toucht in preſenting the vices of others. If a morall, it is to perſwade men to humanity and good life, to inſtruct them in ciuility and good manners, ſhewing them the fruits of honeſty, and the end of villany.

Vſe of Hiſtoricall playes.

Vſe of Morals.

Vſe of Comedyes.

Verſibus exponi Tragicis res Comica non vult.

Againe, *Horace, Arte Poëtica.*

Et noſtri proaui Plautinos & numeros et
Laudauere ſales——

If a Comedy, it is pleaſantly contriued with merry accidents, and intermixt with apt and witty ieſts, to preſent before the Prince at certain times of ſolemnity, or elſe merily fitted to the ſtage. And what is then the ſubiect of this harmeleſſe mirth? either in the ſhape of a Clowne, to ſhew

others

others their slouenly and vnhansome behauiour, that they may reforme that simplicity in themselues, which others make their sport, lest they happen to become the like subiect of generall scorne to an auditory, else it intreates of loue, deriding foolish inamorates, who spend their ages, their spirits, nay themselues, in the seruile and ridiculous imployments of their Mistresses: and these are mingled with sportfull accidents, to recreate such as of themselues are wholly deuoted to Melancholly, which corrupts the bloud: or to refresh such weary spirits as are tired with labour, or study, to moderate the cares and heauinesse of the minde, that they may returne to their trades and faculties with more zeale and earnestnesse, after some small soft and pleasant retirement. Sometimes they discourse of Pantaloones, Vsurers that haue vnthrifty sonnes, which both the fathers and sonnes may behold to their instructions: sometimes of Curtesans, to diuulge their subtelties and snares, in which yong men may be intangled, shewing them the meanes to auoyd them. If we present a Pastorall, we shew the harmelesse loue of Sheepheards diuersly moralized, distinguishing betwixt the craft of the Citty, and the innocency of the sheep-coat. Briefly, there is neither Tragedy, History, Comedy, Morrall or Pastorall, from which an infinite vse cannot be gathered. I speake not in the defence of any lasciuious shewes, scurrelous ieasts, or scandalous inuectiues: If there be any such, I banish them quite from my patronage; yet *Horace, Sermon* 1. *Satyr* 4. thus writes.

Vse of Pastorals.

Eupolis atq; Cratinus Aristophanesq; Poetæ,
Atque alij quorum Comœdia prisca virorum est:
Si quis erat dignus describi, quod malus, aut fur,
Quod Mœchus foret, aut sicarius, aut alioqui,
Famosus, multa cum libertate notabant.

Eupolis, Cratinus, Aristophanes, and other Comike Poets in the time of *Horace*, with large scope, and vnbridled liberty boldly

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boldly and plainly ſcourged all ſuch abuſes as in their ages were generally practiſed, to the ſtaining and blemiſhing of a faire and beautifull Common-weale. Likewiſe, a learned Gentleman in his Apology for Poetry, ſpeakes thus: Tragedies well handled be a moſt worthy kinde of Poeſie. Comedies make men ſee and ſhame at their faults, and proceeding further amongſt other Vniuerſity-playes, he remembers the Tragedy of *Richard* the third, acted in Saint *Iohns* in *Cambridge*, ſo eſſentially, that had the tyrant *Phaleris* beheld his bloudy proceedings, it had mollified his heart, and made him relent at ſight of his inhumane maſſacres. Further, he commends of Comedies, the *Cambridge Pedantius*, and the *Oxford Bellum Grammaticale*; and leauing them paſſes on to our publicke playes, ſpeaking liberally in their praiſe, and what commendable vſe may bee gathered of them. If you peruſe *Margarita Poëtica*, you may ſee what excellent vſes and ſentences he hath gathered out of *Terence* his *Andrea*, *Euenuchus*, and the reſt. Likewiſe out of *Plautus* his *Amphitrio*, *Aſinaria*, and moreouer, *Ex Comadijs Philodoxis*, *Caroli Acretini*: *De falſa Hipocrita*, *& triſti Mercurij*, *Ronſij verſellenſis*: *Ex Comedia Philanira Vgolini parmenſis*, all reuerend ſchollers, and Comicke Poets, reade elce the 4 Tragedies, *Philunica*, *Petrus*, *Aman*, *Katherina*, *Claudij Rosletti Beluenſis*: But I ſhould tire my ſelfe to reckon the names of all *French*, *Roman*, *German*, *Spaniſh*, *Italian*, and *Engliſh* Poets, being in number infinite, and their labours extant to approue their worthineſſe.

Is thy minde Noble? and wouldſt thou be further ſtir'd vp to magnanimity? Behold, vpon the ſtage thou maiſt ſee *Hercules*, *Achilles*, *Alexander*, *Ceſar*, *Alcibiades*, *Lyſander*, *Sertorius*, *Haniball*, *Antigonus*, *Philip* of *Macedon*, *Methridates* of *Pontus*, *Pyrrhus* of *Epire*, *Agesilaus* among the *Lacedemonians*, *Epaminondas*, amongſt the *Thebans*: *Scevola* alone entring the armed tents of *Porſenna*: *Horatius Cocles* alone withſtanding the whole army of the *Hetrurians*: *Leonides* of *Sparta*, chooſing a Lyon to leade a band of Deere, rather

rather then one Deere to conduct an army of Lyons, with infinite others in their owne persons qualities,& shapes,animating thee with courage, deterring thee frō cowardise. Hast thou of thy Country well deserued? and art thou of thy labour euill requited? to associate thee thou mayest see the valiant *Roman Marcellus* pursue *Hannibal* at *Nola*, conquering *Syracusa*, vanquishing the *Gauls*, all *Padua*, and presently (for his reward) banisht his Country into *Greece*. There thou mayest see *Scipio Affricanus*, now triumphing for the conquest of all *Affrica*, and immediatly exil'd the confines of *Romania*. Art thou inclined to lust? behold the falles of the *Tarquins*, in the rape of *Lucrece*: the guerdon of luxury in the death of *Sardanapalus*: *Appius* destroyed in the rauishing of *Virginia*, and the destruction of *Troy* in the lust of *Helena*. Art thou proud? our Scene presents thee with the fall of *Phaeton*, *Narcissus* pining in the loue of his shadow, ambitious *Hamon*, now calling himselfe a God, and by and by thrust headlong among the Diuels. We present men with the vglinesse of their vices, to make them the more to abhorre them, as the *Persians* vse, who aboue all sinnes, loathing drunkennesse, accustomed in their solemne feasts, to make their seruants and captiues extremely ouercome with wine, and then call their children to view their nasty and lothsome behauiour, making them hate that sin in themselues, which shewed so grosse and abhominable in others. The like vse may be gathered of the drunkards so naturally imitated in our playes, to the applause of the Actor, content of the auditory, and reprouing of the vice. Art thou couetous? go no further then *Plautus* his Comedy called *Euclio*.

Dum fallax seruus, durus pater, improba lena
Vixerit, & meretrix blanda, Menandros erit.
While thir's false seruant, or obdurate sire,
Sly baud, smooth whore, Menandros wee'l admire.

To end in a word. Art thou addicted to prodigallity? enuy? cruelty? periury? flattery? or rage? our Scenes affoord

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thee ſtore of men to ſhape your liues by, who be frugall, louing, gentle, truſty, without ſoothing, and in all things temperate. Wouldſt thou be honourable? iuſt, friendly, moderate, deuout, merciſull, and louing concord? thou mayeſt ſee many of their fates and ruines, who haue beene diſhonourable, iniuſt, falſe, gluttenous, ſacrilegious, bloudy-minded, and brochers of diſſention. Women likewiſe that are chaſte, are by vs extolled, and encouraged in their vertues, being inſtanced by *Diana*, *Belphebe*, *Matilda*, *Lucrece*, and the Counteſſe of *Salisbury*. The vnchaſte are by vs ſhewed their errors, in the perſons of *Phrine*, *Lais*, *Thais*, *Flora*: and amongſt vs, *Roſamond*, and Miſtreſſe *Shore*. What can ſooner print modeſty in the ſoules of the wanton, then by diſcouering vnto them the monſtrouſneſſe of their ſin? It followes that we proue theſe exerciſes to haue beene the diſcouerers of many notorious murders, long concealed from the eyes of the world. To omit all farre-fetcht inſtances, we wil proue it by a domeſtike, and home-borne truth, which within theſe few yeares happened. At *Lin* in *Norfolke*, the then Earle of *Suſſex* players acting the old Hiſtory of Fryer *Francis*, & preſenting a woman, who inſatiately doting on a yong gentleman, had (the more ſecurely to enioy his affection) miſchieuouſly and ſecretly murdered her husband, whoſe ghoſt haunted her, and at diuers times in her moſt ſolitary and priuate contemplations, in moſt horrid and fearefull ſhapes, appeared, and ſtood before her. As this was acted, a townes-woman (till then of good eſtimation and report) finding her conſcience (at this preſenment) extremely troubled, ſuddenly skritched and cryd out Oh my husband, my husband! I ſee the ghoſt of my husband fiercely threatning and menacing me. At which ſhrill and vexpected out-cry, the people about her, moou'd to a ſtrange amazement, inquired the reaſon of her clamour, when preſently vn-urged, ſhe told them, that ſeuen yeares ago, ſhe, to be poſſeſt of ſuch a Gentleman (meaning him) had poyſoned her husband, whoſe fearefull image perſonated

A ſtrange accident happening at a play.

ted it selfe in the shape of that ghost: whereupon the murdresse was apprehended, before the Iustices further examined, & by her voluntary confession after condemned. That this is true, as well by the report of the Actors as the records of the Towne, there are many eye-witnesses of this accident yet liuing, vocally to confirme it.

A strange accident happening at a play.

As strange an accident happened to a company of the same quality some 12 yeares ago, or not so much, who playing late in the night at a place called *Perin* in *Cornwall*, certaine *Spaniards* were landed the same night vnsuspected, and vndiscouered, with intent to take in the towne, spoyle and burne it, when suddenly, euen vpon their entrance, the players (ignorant as the townes-men of any such attempt) presenting a battle on the stage with their drum and trumpets strooke vp a lowd alarme: which the enemy hearing, and fearing they were discouered, amazedly retired, made some few idle shot in a brauado, and so in a hurly-burly fled disorderly to their boats. At the report of this tumult, the townes-men were immediatly armed, and pursued them to the sea, praysing God for their happy deliuerance from so great a danger, who by his prouidence made these strangers the instrument and secondary meanes of their escape from such imminent mischife, and the tyranny of so remorcelesse an enemy.

A strange accident happening at a play.

Another of the like wonder happened at *Amsterdam* in *Holland*, a company of our *English* Comedians (well knowne) trauelling those Countryes, as they were before the Burgers and other the chiefe inhabitants, acting the last part of the 4 sons of *Aymon*, towards the last act of the history, where penitent *Renaldo*, like a common labourer, liued in disguise, vowing as his last pennance, to labour & carry burdens to the structure of a goodly Church there to be erected: whose diligence the labourers enuying, since by reason of his stature and strength, hee did vsually perfect more worke in a day, then a dozen of the best, (hee working for his conscience, they for their lucres.) Whereupon

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by reaſon his induſtry had ſo much diſparaged their liuing, conſpired amongſt themſelues to kill him, waiting ſome opportunity to finde him aſleepe, which they might eaſily doe, ſince the ſoreſt labourers are the ſoundeſt ſleepers, and induſtry is the beſt preparatiue to reſt. Hauing ſpy'd their opportunity, they draue a naile into his temples, of which wound immediatly he dyed. As the Actors handled this, the audience might on a ſodaine vnderſtand an out-cry, and loud ſhrike in a remote gallery, and preſſing about the place, they might perceiue a woman of great grauity, ſtrangely amazed, who with a diſtracted & troubled braine oft ſighed out theſe words: Oh my husband, my husband! The play, without further interruption, proceeded; the woman was to her owne houſe conducted, without any apparant ſuſpition, euery one coniecturing as their fancies led them. In this agony ſhe ſome few dayes languiſhed, and on a time, as certaine of her well diſpoſed neighbours came to comfort her, one amongſt the reſt being Church-warden, to him the Sexton poſts, to tell him of a ſtrange thing happening him in the ripping vp of a graue: ſee here (quoth he) what I haue found, and ſhewes them a faire skull, with a great nayle pierſt quite through the braine-pan, but we cannot coniecture to whom it ſhould belong, nor how long it hath laine in the earth, the graue being conſuſed, and the fleſh conſumed. At the report of this accident, the woman, out of the trouble of her afflicted conſcience, diſcouered a former murder. For 12 yeares ago, by driuing that nayle into that skull, being the head of her huſband, ſhe had trecherouſly ſlaine him. This being publickly confeſt, ſhe was arraigned, condemned, adiudged, and burned. But I draw my ſubiect to greater length then I purpoſed: theſe therefore out of other infinites, I haue collected, both for their familiarneſſe and lateneſſe of memory.

Thus our Antiquity we haue brought from the *Grecians* in the time of *Hercules*: from the *Macedonians* in the age of *Alexander*

Alexander: from the *Romans* long before *Iulius Cæsar*, and since him, through the reigns of 23 Emperours succeeding, euen to *Marcus Aurelius*: after him they were supported by the *Mantuans*, *Venetians*, *Valencians*, *Neopolitans*, the *Florentines*, and others: since, by the *German* Princes, the *Palsgraue*, the *Landsgraue*, the Dukes of *Saxony*, of *Brounswicke*, &c. The Cardinall at *Bruxels*, hath at this time in pay, a company of our *English* Comedians. The *French* King allowes certaine companies in *Paris*, *Orleans*, besides other Cities: so doth the King of *Spaine*, in *Ciuill*, *Madrill*, and other prouinces. But in no Country they are of that eminence that ours are: so our most royall, and euer renouned soueraigne, hath licenced vs in London: so did his predecessor, the thrice vertuous virgin, Queene *Elizabeth*, and before her, her sister, Queene *Mary*, *Edward* the sixth, and their father, *Henry* the eighth: and before these in the tenth yeare of the reigne of *Edward* the fourth, *Anno* 1490. *Iohn Stowe*, an ancient and graue Chronicler, records (amongst other varieties tending to the like effect) that a play was acted at a place called Skinners well, fast by Clerken-well, which continued eight dayes, and was of matter from *Adam* and *Eue*, (the first creation of the world.) The spectators were no worse then the Royalty of *England*. And amongst other commendable exercises in this place, the Company of the Skinners of *London* held certaine yearely solemne playes. In place wherof, now in these latter daies, the wrastling, and such other pastimes haue been kept, and is still held about *Bartholmew-tide*. Also in the yeare 1390. the 14 yeare of the reigne of *Richard* the second, the 18. of Iuly, were the like *Enterludes* recorded of at the same place, which continued 3 dayes together, the King and Queene, and Nobility being there present. Moreouer, to this day, in diuers places of *England*, there be townes that hold the priuiledge of their Faires, and other Charters by yearely stage-playes, as at *Manningtree* in *Suffolke*, *Kendall* in the *North*, & others. To let these passe, as things familiarly knowne to

Cardinall *Alfonsus*.

Times kept tide.

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all men. Now to speake of some abuse lately crept into the quality, as an inueighing against the State, the Court, the Law, the Citty, and their gouernements; with the particularizing of priuate mens humors (yet aliue) Noble-men, & others. I know it distastes many; neither do I any way approue it, nor dare I by any meanes excuse it. The liberty which some arrogate to themselues, committing their bitternesse, and liberall inuectiues against all estates, to the mouthes of Children, supposing their iuniority to be a priuiledge for any rayling, be it neuer so violent, I could aduise all such, to curbe and limit this presumed liberty within the bands of discretion and gouernment. But wise and iuditial Censurers, before whom such complaints shall at any time hereafter come, wil not (I hope) impute these abuses to any transgression in vs, who haue euer been carefull and prouident to shun the like. I surcease to prosecute this any further, lest my good meaning be (by some) misconstrued: and fearing likewise, lest with tediousnesse I tire the patience of the fauourable Reader, heere (though abruptly) I conclude my third and last

TREATISE.

Iuuat impatiuntur opes, mihi parvulæ sint.

TO

To my approued good Friend, Mr. *Nicholas Okes*.

THE infinite faults escaped in my booke of *Britaines Troy*, by the negligence of the Printer, as the misquotations, mistaking of sillables, misplacing halfe lines, coining of strãge and neuer heard of words. These being without number, when I would haue taken a particular account of the *Errata*, the Printer answered me, hee would not publish his owne disworkemanship, but rather let his owne fault lye vpon the necke of the Author: and being fearefull that others of his quality, had beene of the same nature, and condition, and finding you on the contrary, so carefull, and industrious, so serious and laborious to doe the Author all the rights of the presse, I could not choose but gratulate your honest indeauours with this short remembrance. Here likewise, I must necessarily insert a manifest iniury done me in that worke, by taking the two Epistles of *Paris* to *Helen*, and *Helen* to *Paris*, and printing them in a lesse volume, vnder the name of another, which may put the world in opinion I might steale them from him; and hee to doe himselfe right, hath since published them in his owne name: but as I must acknowledge my

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my lines not worthy his patronage, vnder whom he hath publisht them, so the Author I know much offended with M. *Iaggard* (that altogether vnknowne to him) presumed to make so bold with his name. These, and the like dishonesties I know you to bee cleere of; and I could wish but to bee the happy Author of so worthy a worke as I could willingly commit to your care and workmanship.

Yours euer

THOMAS HEYVVOOD.

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Heywood, T.